# Freeplay
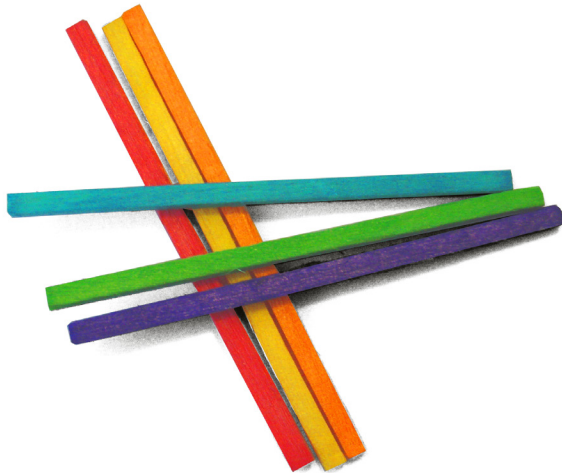
Independent Games Festival

August 17 - 21 2011

# Freeplay 2011

The Faculty of Information Technology Monash University
is a proud supporter of the Freeplay Independent Games Festival

The Faculty has a long history of supporting both commercial and
independent games events in Victoria.

We are proud to also support in 2011
Atomic Live, Experimedia (State Library) and
CGBC - Computer Games Boot Camp.

For more information about our courses in
Games Development and Multimedia -
www.infotech.monash.edu.au

**MONASH** University
Information Technology

# A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Every creative act begins with an idea. What happens to the idea after that is a long, slow, sometimes brilliant, sometimes difficult process of kneading and shaping, moulding and smoothing, trying and failing, observing and experimenting, before the idea takes on any sort of tangible presence in the real world.

If Freeplay in 2010 was about looking out at the much wider world of play and how it connects with videogames, culture, art, education, and society, then Freeplay in 2011 is about looking at the individual and their role in not only the development of an idea into a game, but also in the individual's role in politics, in culture, in creativity, and in a wider artistic sphere.

To do that, we've widened the scope of the festival, introducing a new Playful Program that we hope takes games out into the streets and bars of Melbourne, we've created a new Interview Series to dig into what makes some of our most prominent creatives tick. We've brought back the awards to celebrate the best in local independent development, and we've built a conference program that tries to draw together a unique mix of developers, artists, students, educators, critics, and players.

We look forward to seeing you at the Festival. We made it just for you.

Paul Callaghan

---

## STAFF

### Director
Paul Callaghan

### Communications Coordinator
Meredith Tucker-Evans

### Production Manager
Ariel Magnes

### Associate Producers
Cory Zanoni, Leena van Deventer, Monika Batchelor, Fiona Murray, Jennifer Sandercock

## FREEPLAY BOARD

Hugh Davies, Cameron Rogers, Robert Pulham, Paul Gurney, David Surman

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Helen Stuckey, David Surman, Hamish Curry, Truna, Lubi Thomas, Simon Joslin

## DESIGN

### Pachinko Pictures

# CONFERENCE PROGRAM SESSIONS

### Why we do what we do

Craig Duturbure, Daniel Golding, Matt Ditton, Chair: Rob Macbride

In a time of closures & acquisitions, in layoffs and apparent opportunities, this panel looks at the real reasons we got into making games in the first place and tries to remind us why we do it — and why we should continue to do it.

### What we were playing

Andrew Goulding & Ben Kosmina, Luke Muscat

Yangtian Li & Henrik Pettersson, Jason Bakker

Local developers discuss the games they were playing while they developed their own.

### The big and the small stage

Thomas Apperley, Jens Schroeder, Others tbc. Chair: Floyd Mueller

The internet has changed our audience and our peers from those directly near us to everyone in the world with an net connection and a computer. This shift requires us to be aware of not only what works locally but internationally too. This session looks at how Australian development has evolved, is represented, and is perceived as part of the world stage.

### Everything is Political

Ben Eltham, Kieran Lord, Jeff Brand, Truna. Chair: Daniel Golding

Videogames don't exist in isolation. They are part of artistic, cultural, and political spheres — even if some would much rather they weren't. This panel takes a look at the way videogames are used as political tools and how we as developers and critics can better engage with that, and perhaps wrestle some of the conversation back into our hands.

### Indies, academics, and institutions

Lubi Thomas, Conor O'Kane, Hamish Curry. Chair: Sean Fabri

The conversation goes back and forth — education doesn't understand development; development doesn't understand education; cultural institutions should better support development; development is all about money. What are the real pressures that inform these conversations? And what could be built from a better understanding between education, cultural institutions, and indie development?

### (un)Keynote

Join us for our closing, crowdsourced call to arms / keynote / experiment.

### Judging games by their cover

Ryan Keable

In the competitive world of mobile gaming, particularly the iPhone market, it pays to put your art into perspective. This workshop explores why that extra layer of polish to your art is game changing.

### I Don't Hate Mondays : Creating a Company You Might Actually Enjoy

Craig Duturbure, Joe Tabor

The Games Industry in Australia has been around a long time, and recently it's had some big shake-ups. To head forward into a brave and sometimes scary new world, companies need to change the way they relate to their staff, their publishers, and their audience. This talk takes the listeners through the early days of one of Melbourne's newest developers, Fiasco Studios, and outlines the conscious choices being made to create a better culture, a better employee lifestyle, and hopefully, a much healthier and more enjoyable local industry.

### Tiny Speakers

Stephan Schutze

Just because the devices are small doesn't mean we need to skimp on audio quality. This session looks at ways to squeeze the best out of our back-pocket gadgets, and some innovative ways of using sound and design to create new portable experiences.

### Ways of thinking about the world

Ben McKenzie, Sean Fabri

Ideas are cheap. Good ideas are slightly more expensive, and slightly harder to identify and nurture. This workshop looks at ways of developing new ideas, identifying their strengths and weaknesses, and adapting and integrating feedback.

### Code and the Player Experience

Trevor Powell

Code is the invisible scaffolding of a game, but decisions made at those low levels can easily influence design decisions and the resulting player experience. From premature optimisation to garbage collection methods to exposing variables, this workshop looks at some of the ways a seemingly unimportant coding decision can change the development of a game.

## Handling Scattered Teams

Eyal Chameides

The internet has turned our audience and our peers from local developers into anyone in the world with a connection. This shift enables new ways of working, with teams spread out across the world producing code, art, design, and audio. This workshop looks at some of the ways of managing teams and some of the pitfalls and opportunities in this new model.

## Cheating the Golden Rule

Farbs, Scott Reismanis, Rick Chen, Chair: Ben Britten

In the traditional studio model, the cry of 'he who controls the gold makes the rules' is at the root of everything. Independent development aims to remove that restriction, but we all need to eat. This panel discusses some of the innovations in funding, their good and bad, and some of the best practices in each to make sure that the one controlling the gold is you.

## That one piece of advice

Truna; Leigh Klaver
Rob MacBride, Ben Britten

In these microlectures, developers, educators, critics, and artists give you the one piece of advice that they hold above all others.

## Growing up in a gaming culture

Luke Bennett, Daniel Donahoo, Leena van Deventer. Chair: Hamish Curry

As the first generation of games players grow up, get married, have children, settle down, they face some interesting questions about how to integrate their past-time into their new life and how to engage their children with it — as well as facing off against the crop of moral guardians and media personalities who, inevitably, have never played. This panel looks at what it's like to grow up in a gaming culture and what we hope to pass on.

## The words that we use

Drew Taylor, Alison Croggon, Ben Croshaw, Andrew McMillen. Chair: Leigh Klaver

Essential to the development of any cultural form is a strong critical culture, one that can place work in context, articulate for an audience what it is attempting, and shine a light on flaws and success. This panel looks at the role of criticism, review, and the broad spectrum of games reporting.

## The next 12 months

Hugh Davies, Trent Kusters, Sayraphim Lothian, Lisa Dempster. Chair: Matt Ditton

The past 12 months have been a time of upheaval and opportunity. This panel looks forward to the next Freeplay and tries to predict those things outside of our control and pin down those things we''ll be able to grab with both hands.

## How Every Little Decision Can Bring You Closer To or Further Away from Creating Crap

Christy Dena, David May, Floyd Mueller, Luke Muscat

A (self-described) "handsome and debonaire stranger" said to me the best way to avoid creating dull projects is "don't work for shit companies" and "only go indie if you have a brain". But what happens if you (think) you don't work for a shit company and you have a brain? Are there still little things you can do that gradually and inevitably steer your project into the sea of mediocrity? This session is a discussion about how all of those little design and process decisions build to make or break your game.

## The use of metrics

Paul Gray

Embroiled in development, it's easy to forget that what we make is designed for players. This workshop looks at ways of gathering information on player behaviour, how to interpret it, and how best to use it to support their end-experience

## Designing an Opus

Andrew Curnock

Game audio is the only element of a game that is unburdened by the game's physical domain. Graphics, controls, and player actions all take place within the confines of the screen or the console, but a game's audio design can fill a room, and music is an essential part of that as it supports or reflects what's going on inside our little gameplay boxes. This session looks at how to think about music, what to look for in writing a brief for it, and how it can be used to enhance the player experience.

## How to Design the Same Game, Twice

Thuyen Nguyen, Andy Simons

Two different designers (representing their respective companies) compare and contrast how they approached creating games based on the AFL. A lively discussion about design approach, limitations, license restrictions and other random things in the context of sports games.

# FREEPLAY ARCADE AND EXPO

### Bubble - Chris Lewis

Chris Lewis is currently a first year student at Swinburne University. He uses his spare time to create games in C++ and maintain his website / blog, Coding Kick. His most recent project, Bubble, explores ideas of social interaction with the world around us.

### Pollinator - Tim Randall

Pollinator is a simple touch-based game for iPhone, iPad and Android. Simply draw a path for your bee to follow from the hive to the flowers and back again. Touch dragonflies to squish them and spit out any bees that they've captured.

### Puzzle Treasure - Play-Bit Entertainment

Puzzle Treasure is a casual puzzle game designed for social networks like Facebook. Players strive to become a master treasure-hunter and solve a huge variety of tricky puzzles in order to earn and uncover rare artifacts, idols and treasures! Puzzle Treasure is due for release in late 2011.

### Winnitron Au - Winnitron AU Team

The Winnitron AU is an arcade cabinet for independent video games. It's goal is to inspire game developers to become an active part of the independent video game community. Housed permanently at the Mana Bar Melbourne, the Australian variant of the Winnitron 1000 offers a unique entry point for local game developers to get involved.

### Once Upon a Spacetime - Digitalis

Once upon a spacetime is a small, simple, 2.5D game about the search for love for in an uncaring universe. It features a deep space/deep ocean environment, procedurally composed music, and tiny dancers. It has no score, health, text, dialogue, time limits, enemies or punishments, but we've aimed to give it a soul. The player controls a couple in love, dancing through a space environment. It's more an interactive artwork than a game.

### Critical Mass - Manic Game Studios

Manic Game Studios is an Australian independant game developer consisting of two members, James Barrie and Matthew Edmondson. Their first release is Critical Mass a 3D Action Puzzle game bringing traditional match 3 into the world of 3D. Critical Mass combines fast addictive gameplay with strategy to create a new and innovative gameplay experience.

### Whisperous - Swing Interactive

Whisperous is a 2.5D platformer for PC/Mac intended for X-box 360. Players can interact with their environment, attracting and repelling various objects and particles to transverse, explore and re-energise the environment with light. Swing Interactive was founded by 13 talented students of QANTM College Melbourne and an external audio contractor.

### Slingshot Justice - Anomalous Interactive

Slingshot Justice tells a heart-wrenching tale of warfare in the schoolyard. As a fifth grade vigilante, you have taken up action to protect the lemonade stands of the youth from the local bullies. With your trusty slingshot in hand, you'll defend innocence from brutality, or get a wedgie trying.

### Under our Green Skies / Gangsta Snap - Ahasai Designs

Ahasai Designs specialises in mobile development primarily producing innovative high quality titles within the Cyber-Punk genre. Under our Green Skies is a breathtaking, immersive family friendly experience following the classic father rescues daughter in a hostile futuristic word. Gansgsta Snap is a totally insane, crazy and weird resurrection of the classic Snap card game taking on gangs around the world.

### Battle Group - Bane Games

Battle Group puts you in command of modern day fighting ships in a new take on action orientated naval warfare. Unlock patrol boats, battleships and aircraft carriers as you progress through the story driven campaign.

Battle Group is being developed by Bane Games a small independent developer based in Brisbane.

### Antichamber - Alexander Bruce

Antichamber is a game about discovery, set inside a vibrant, minimal, Escher-like world, where geometry and space follow unfamiliar rules, and obstacles are a matter of perception. Journey through the depths of a non-Euclidean labyrinth, as you create, destroy and manipulate matter, and uncover new ways to overcome your surroundings in this mind-bending psychological exploration game.

### Mining For Profits! - Agents of Chaos

Have you ever wondered what would happen if you gave email scammers your money and they turned out to be liegitimate? Come by to see our theoretical take on such a situation - a mining operation that's remote controlled by software developed by out-of-work game developers.

## Monash University

The Faculty of Information Technology Monash University is a proud supporter of Freeplay. The Faculty of Information Technology provides outstanding teaching and research across six campuses. By integrating its computing and information technology disciplines, the Faculty provides enormous breadth and depth of teaching and research to the campuses, strategic alliances, centres and partnerships that form the Monash global network.

andrew.owen@infotech.monash.edu.au | 03 9903 1441 | www.it.monash.edu

## RMIT University

RMIT offers two interlinked games degrees: Bachelor of Design (Games) and Bachelor of IT (Games Graphics Programming)

The Bachelor of Design (Games) is a world-class creative degree that encompasses the width and breadth of contemporary games design. Students can expect to develop digital art, interaction design, game studies and analysis skills. The degree's collaborative studio environment is enriched by industry-experienced staff and state of the art technology.

Adam.Nash@rmit.edu.au | 03 9925 2598 | www.games.rmit.edu.au

## La Trobe University

Games Technology at La Trobe combines a theoretical basis with practical training in games design and development for PCs and consoles. Graduates possess exceptionally-developed programming skills, sound theoretical basis in game design and specialist knowledge and skills in areas including graphics, artificial intelligence, software development and operating systems in addition to the physics and mathematics necessary for producing increasingly realistic computer games

sci.tech@latrobe.edu.au | 03 9479 2220 | www.latrobe.edu.au

## Deakin University

The School of Information Technology at Deakin University offers a range of teaching programmes in Information Technology covering a broad spectrum from telecommunications, through mathematics, to the information technology end of the spectrum which covers IT security, computer science and software development, games design and development, multimedia technology, network computing, and IT services.

sci-tech@deakin.edu.au | 03 9244 6699 | http://www.deakin.edu.au

# INTERVIEW SERIES

## Sunday, August 21, The Wheeler Centre

These FREE in-depth interviews explore the creative processes, successes, and failures of some of our most notable game development creatives.

11:15: Steve Fawkner — Warlords; Puzzle Quest; Galactrix

12:30: Alex Bruce — Antichamber

13:45: Farbs — Captain Forever; Captain Jameson

15:00: Simon Joslin — Train Conductor

# AFTER PARTIES

Thanks to IGDA Melbourne, we'll be retreating to the nearby Order of Melbourne (2/401 Swanston Street) on both Saturday and Sunday Evening

# SPEAKERS

## truna aka j.turner

truna aka j.turner is the Brisbane IGDA Chapter auntie, game activist and researcher. She is dead keen on supporting a vibrant Aussie independent game community and has been involved in running a series of outreach programs to foster understanding about the medium (and business) of the game since 2004. Along with a number of partners in crime, truna is also responsible for the fabulous 48-hour game making challenge — now entering its fifth year. She believes that the game is an extraordinary powerful form of media and that more people should be exploring and extending its potential. truna is into software culture, she writes about the nature of the game interface, its fun, flaws, foibles and [f]antasmagorias ⋯ she believes design is power, and game design more so.

## Thomas Apperley

Tom Apperley, Ph.D. is a researcher of digital media technologies. His previous writing has covered digital games, mobile phones, digital literacies and pedagogies, and Social inclusion. Tom is currently a Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne. Tom's book Gaming Rhythms: Play and Counterplay from the Situated to the Global was published by The Institute of Network Cultures in 2010.

## Crystal Ashdown

Crystal is a florist who spent a lot of time playing games as a kid, then stopped for a while, then started again after she moved into a share house full of nerds with consoles. She now spends more time on her PS3 than working with flowers, and that's a little embarrassing.

## Jason Bakker

Jason has worked at Wicked Witch Software in a design and programming role for five years, developing games such as Office Chair Deathrace (PC), Mascot Manor/Mania (DS) and the recently released AFL (Wii). His writing has been featured in Game Developer Magazine and on Gamasutra.com.

In his spare time he works on small games and prototypes, and attempts to distil the process of making a good game into four easy steps. He's up to "Step 3. ????".

## Luke Bennett

Luke has been playing computer games and table top role playing games for the last thirty years. Now as a parent, he is finding that he is constructively reappraising his hobby in the light of his children's interest.

He occasional writes for Wired.com's GeekDad blog, but apparently only when he is able to overcome his Minecraft addiction.

Professionally, he has been a railway signalman, a fruit picker, and a vocational teacher. He currently works as an ecological consultant for a major infrastructure project, as well as dabbling in hospitality.

## Jeff Brand

Jeff Brand is Associate Professor of Communication and Media at Bond University where he coordinates subjects on Digital Media and Computer Games Industry and Policy. Jeff publishes and presents research on audiences emerging media and regulation. He is author of a series of reports in Australia and New Zealand on game audience demographics, behaviours and attitudes for the Interactive Games and Entertainment Association. He also conducts research for government and industry including for the former Office of Film and Literature Classification, the Australian Communications and Media Authority, and SBS Corporation. Currently he is serving on the Australian Law Reform Commission Advisory Committee for the National Classification Scheme Review.

## Caleb Bridge

Caleb Bridge has been a writer for five years but a video game connoisseur for much longer. In addition to the games, he loves the culture surrounding them and is fascinated by the video game development process, including the creativity and intelligence that go into this wonderful entertainment medium. He believes that video games are currently representing only a small part of their potential, but is very excited to see how the industry will move forward in the coming years.

Caleb has dabbled around the industry for many years and is currently working as a freelancer.

## Ben Britten

Ben started his software career building websites for the University of Colorado at Boulder. He then moved to consulting for clients such as Sony, and the BBC. Tired of the corporate life, he took a position at a company called Spydercam creating real-time motion control software. After five years at Spydercam, Ben produced a suite of tools that won him an Academy Award for Technical Achievement for his work on 3D Volumetric motion systems. In 2005 Ben moved to Australia to be with his wife and transitioned from the film industry into the games industry. He has since developed more than 15 iOS games and contributed chapters to a handful of iPhone development books including "Beginning Iphone Game Development" and "iPhone Advanced Projects". Ben Joined the team at Tin Man Games in 2009 to help create the Gamebook Adventures series of games.

## Alexander Bruce

Alexander Bruce is the creator of Antichamber, an upcoming exploration puzzle game set within an Escher-like world. Antichamber has been showcased in major competitions around the world, received two nominations in the 2011 IGF, and was one of the Grand Prize Winners in Make Something Unreal, run by Epic Games. More recently, it was selected as one of the winners for the PAX10 Showcase for 2011, held at the Penny Arcade expo in Seattle.

Between the constant development on Antichamber over the past two years, he has also traveled the globe to speak at conferences including the Tokyo Game Show and the GDC in San Francisco, and has also exhibited the game at major events such as E3, DICE and GDC China, among others.

He doesn't have any spare time, because doing all of that is a hell of a lot of work for one person.

## Paul Callaghan

Paul is a freelance writer, designer, educator, and the director of the Freeplay Independent Games Festival.

## Eyal Chameides

With a background in computing and classical arts Eyal began his path in game development in a very unlikely place: The Israeli Intelligence. There, Eyal lead a creative department in developing computer based training applications for the IDF.

Eyal then moved to Melbourne where he started working with the local games industry as well graduating with distinction from RMIT with a BA in Games Design.

For the past few years, Eyal has been working as the creative director for Product Madness, a San Francisco based games company specializing in social networks. Eyal manages the creative team which is spread across Melbourne, San Francisco, London, Eastern Europe and India.

## Rick Chen

Rick Chen is an entrepreneur and a social change maker with a strong focus on new media design. He has a keen interested in web based technology, user interface design and innovative ideas that change peoples behaviour.

Rick co-founded Australia's first crowdfunding platform Pozible in 2010 which quickly become one of the major crowdfunding platforms world wide and has helped lots of creative projects get off the ground.

## Alison Croggon

Alison Croggon is described by the Australian Book Review as "one of the most powerful lyric poets writing today". She has published several collections of poetry, and has won the Anne Elder and Dame Mary Gilmore Prizes and was shortlisted for the Victorian (twice) and NSW Premier's Literary Awards. Her most recent collection is THEATRE (Salt Publishing 2008). Previous collections include ATTEMPTS AT BEING and a New and Selected from Arc Publications, THE COMMON FLESH. She writes in many genres: she is the author of the critically acclaimed and popular YA series THE BOOKS OF PELLINOR and runs the influential review blog THEATRE NOTES (theatrenotes.blogspot.com), for which she won the 2009 Geraldine Pascall Prize for Critic of the Year. She has also written several works for theatre, including the operas THE BURROW and GAUGUIN with the composer Michael Smetanin.

## Ben Croshaw

Ben 'Yahtzee' Croshaw is a UK-born writer and professional video game critic, best known for Zero Punctuation, the weekly video game critique series that has been running on The Escapist (www.escapistmagazine.com) since 2007. Outside the day job he has acted as an indie game designer and game writer, and is the author of Mogworld, a gaming-themed novel published by Dark Horse Books. He lives in Brisbane.

## Andrew Curnock

Described by his childhood piano teacher as "the worst student" she'd ever had, Andrew has forged a career making music and sound for a diverse range of media platforms. Having written music for film, television, and even making those cheesy polyphonic mobile phone ringtones, his first game soundtrack was for a Gameboy Advance title in 2006.

Since then, Andrew has grown up to be:

- a Nintendo sound specialist; writing for titles on the DS, DSi, and Wii

- an academic illusionist; lecturing at universities on music and sound

- a freestyle audio contortionist- hacking Microsoft Kinect hardware to make life more interesting.

He also has a track on the upcoming Game Music Initiative's international game composers collaboration, One Big Album- which will be out on iTunes very soon!

## Hamish Curry

Hamish Curry is the Education and Onsite Learning Manager at the State Library of Victoria. As a teacher with 14 years experience, in the UK, Japan, and six years coordinating a city campus in Melbourne, he understands the importance of engagement and creativity in stimulating learning. In his work at the State Library, information and technology go hand-in-hand with amazing collections and exhibitions, and an array of education workshops, online resources, and public programs using film and games to engage new audiences.

## Hugh Davies

Hugh Davies is an artist and producer whose creative works have been widely exhibited internationally. He is the Artistic Director of Analogue Art Map and is currently a research student in Media Philosophy at Monash University. He has presented and published papers on pervasive and alternate reality experiences and continues to explore the fuzzy between reality and fiction in a range of immersive experiences. Previously, Hugh was the regional producer at the ABC (Television Multiplatform Division), where he won the Australian Teacher of Media Award for Best Digital Education Tool. Hugh is currently working on the Darkest Puzzle, an alternate reality game concerning the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks.

## Lisa Dempster

Lisa Dempster is the Director of the Emerging Writers' Festival, and author of books The Melbourne Veg Food Guide and Neon Pilgrim.

## Christy Dena

Christy is Director of Universe Creation 101, and when not developing her own projects, she works as an experience designer and writer on transmedia projects, and consults on the expansion of films, TV shows, alternate reality games and performance projects around the world. Recent finished projects she has worked on include Cisco's global alternate reality game The Hunt with No Mimes Media; Tim Kring, The company P & Nokia's Emmy-nominated global alternate reality experience Conspiracy for Good; and ABC's alternate reality drama Bluebird AR. Christy co-wrote the Australian Literature Board's Writer's Guide to Making a Digital Living, wrote the first PhD on Transmedia Practice, and curated Transmedia Victoria. She is currently developing a web-driven comedy drama www.AuthenticinAllCaps.com.

## Matt Ditton

Matt is the convenor of the Games Design program at Griffith University. He's been working in the games industry for the last 11 years. Most recently he lead the team for the ABC game Alternator. And for the last six months has been

amassing an awful lot of gps data.

## Daniel Donahoo

Daniel Donahoo writes for Wired.com's GeekDad blog and the Huffington Post. He is the author of books tackling child development, media and technology. As the Director of Project Synthesis he has introduce LEGO robotics into schools, facilitated RPG for kids and is raising three geeklet gamers of his own.

## Craig Duturbure

Craig has been in the games industry since the Super Nintendo was the most powerful gaming system yet devised. He's worn company shirts from most major Australian games companies (the Torus bowling shirt being the best) and worked on almost every console (the Philips CD-i being the worst). He's now working on games he loves with people who are awesome, so he's either living some kind of Inception or things might actually be getting really good.

## Ben Eltham

National Affairs Correspondent, New Matilda

Arts columnist, Crikey

Fellow, the Centre for Policy Development

## Sean Fabri

Dr Sean Fabri is an actor, a teacher, and a doctor, and his work often requires him to be all three at the same time. In his medical career, his focus is primarily on improving systems, supervising, supporting, and solving problems for junior doctors who are new to working in Australian medicine. He is a corporate trainer in the managerial areas of recruitment, training, and supervision, and a corporate facilitator for innovation and problem solving company Inventium.

Sean has decades of experience in the theatre, with a focus on improvisation, an artform which is equal parts acting, storytelling, and instant fearless creativity. He has taught and performed both in Australia and abroad, and is acclaimed as an expert in the field. His philosophy is that having fun actually matters, so it's something to take to with enthusiasm.

## Farbs

Farbs is obsessed with video games. He spent ten years developing them in the traditional studio environment, but this didn't scratch his development itch. His development itch developed. Soon he started making games outside studio hours, creating freeware experiments and releasing them to the internet. This came to a head one day when he released a game announcing his resignation. Now Farbs never leaves his house, and makes video games morning, noon, and

night.

Projects Farbs has worked on include:

- The Captain Forever series
- ROM CHECK FAIL
- PlayPen
- Indie Kombat
- A thing which he can't talk about quite yet but is awesome
- XCOM (the new one)

Games Farbs was credited on but honestly had nothing to do with include:

- Bioshock

Farbs is somewhat trained as a programmer, but flings himself at all disciplines of game development with great enthusiasm and varying levels of success.

## Steve Fawkner

Steve Fawkner is currently the Design Director at EA/Firemint, but is probably better known for his 21 years at the helm of Infinite Interactive, creating hit series such as Puzzle Quest, Warlords and Warlords Battlecry. A veteran of the games industry with over 2 decades of experience, Steve is still as passionate about games today as he was when he discovered his first Space Invaders Arcade Machine all those years ago. When he's not in the office creating games, Steve's hobbies include sitting at home creating more games, sitting at other people's homes playing games, and sitting in cafes thinking about games.

## Daniel Golding

Daniel Golding is currently undertaking a Phd in the School of Culture and Communication at the University of Melbourne. His research underlines a spatial logic of videogames, drawing on a number of cross-disciplinary theories of space, architecture, and cultural consumption. Daniel tutors and lectures in the fields of cinema, culture, videogames and digital media.

He also regularly writes for Hyper Magazine, and has been recently published in Kill Your Darlings journal and interviewed on 774.

## Andrew Goulding

Andrew Goulding has been a professional game developer since 2002 working in the areas of QA, Programming and Production at 4 games companies in

Australia and the UK.

Andrew started Victorian based independent game studio Brawsome in 2008 with the intention of creating funny story based games, such as those that fall into the point n click adventure category. Brawsome has since developed the award winning Jolly Rover (PC/Mac) and is currently developing MacGuffin's Curse (PC, Mac, iPhone, iPad) as well as contracting on a number of successful casual game titles.

## Paul Gray

Paul is the Director of Marketing & Community Management at Bubble Gum Interactive, an independent children's entertainment studio based in Sydney Australia. Paul leads the marketing and engagement efforts for Little Space Heroes, Bubble Gum's upcoming virtual universe for kids. In this innovative and safe online multiplayer game kids create their own space hero and explore a galaxy full of fun and adventure. Little Space Heroes is slated to start closed beta in September 2011 with full global launch shortly thereafter. Paul has worked in the digital and entertainment industries for over ten years and has an MBA from the Australian Graduate School of Management and a Bachelors degree in Commerce from the University of Wollongong.

## Simon Joslin

Simon Joslin is the Creative Director of The Voxel Agents, an independent studio in Melbourne who have made tracks with their original 'Train Conductor' series on iPhone and iPad. He has also delivered titles on DS, PSP and GBA. Simon is on the board of the Game Developer Association of Australia and would happily argue with you that there's never been a better time to go indie!

## Ryan Keable

Lord Mulletdulla (AKA Ryan Keable), joint ruler of Anomalous Interactive, heralds from the internal flames of South Melbourne. Spawned into the games industry in 2008 as a designer for Pandemic Studios in Brisbane he has since gone on to unlock many achievements in the industry including two console releases (Sabotuer and WiiAFL) and one iPhone release (Slingshot Justice). With every release his powers grow, enabling him to spend more skill points transferred across his multi-talented disciplines of Design, QA, Production and Art.

## Tom Killen

The Voxel Agents create chart topping games for the iTunes store. Their hit title, Train Conductor, has been the #1 game around the world, repeatedly featured on iTunes, and has 4.5 million players worldwide. Tom Killen is deeply engaged in the Melbourne games community. In addition to creating totally

rad iOS games at The Voxel Agents, he assists with the Melbourne IGDA, runs game jams, and participates in game dev events around Melbourne.

## Leigh Klaver

A life long fanatical gamer and caffeine zealot, Leigh is a Melbourne based researcher and lecturer who focuses on computer game players, usability, ludic theory and audio/visual design. His current research is focused on MMORPG players and motivations, though he is also in the process of developing a touch screen platformer. In a previous life he developed Flash applications, websites and was (is) obsessed with music, sound recording and sound effects.

## Ben Kosmina

Ben has been working professionally in the Australian games industry since 2002, working in the roles of QA and design at 2 games companies. Ben's experience has primarily been in the area of game design, starting in level design and moving onto design for new game concepts, with an original published iPhone game — Neonscape, under his belt. He joined Brawsome as a contractor in 2009 where he demonstrated his considerable skill and passion for developing characters, writing dialog and coming up with unique and interesting puzzles. Ben is a tireless game developer and player, and a walking Wikipedia of game knowledge. Prior to his career in the games industry Ben worked as a game journalist and regularly attends international game conferences, through which has developed an impressive network of industry luminaries. Ben is extremely pro-active about finding interesting games and exploring unique ideas.

## Trent Kusters

Writer and designer, Trent Kusters is the founder of design and development collective League of Geeks. Since his background in multimedia and games journalism, Trent has shipped multiple titles whilst Lead Designer at Torus Games, has consulted state governments on game development, lectured at almost every major university and college in Victoria, written articles on gaming culture and development for major publications, was named one of Triple J's "25under25 and smashing it" for 2010, and is on the advisory board for GCAP 2011.

Trent is also invested in the future of development, fostering and mentoring students and contributing to the game development community wherever possible.

## Yangtian Li

Yangtian is a very passionate artist has a love of drawing and animation. She came to Australia from her home country of China to study and to pursue her creative ambitions. Yangtian is currently working as the lead artist at The Voxel Agents, which is an independent game studio focuses on iOS games.

## Kieran Lord

Kieran is a freelance game programmer who becomes an independent developer by night, specializing in small games using Unity.

He has had a hand in the development of several games including Pandemic Studio's "Destroy all Humans 2", the ABC's serious game "Alternator" and Strange Loop's upcoming independent game "Vessel".

## Sayraphim Lothian

Sayraphim Lothian is one half of visual theatre company Terrible Company and has worked with theatre in decay, Three To A Room, Eagle's Nest amongst many others over the years. She has also curated many exhibitions around Melbourne including Totem, Dolls With Souls at Fed Square, and her work is held in collections of the National Gallery of Victoria and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Sayraphim is now working with Coney on a number of projects, she currently works as the Public Programs officer for a local museum and has a Grad Dip in teaching.

## Rob MacBride

Coming up from a largely poverty stricken fine arts career, nowadays Rob works in New Zealand as a games designer for Sidhe Interactive (respectively their casual/social label PikPok). Prior to his exodus Rob also designed for The Voxel Agents, Blendo Games, Tantalus Media, Tripswitch and anyone else willing to feed and clothe him. Additionally Rob has written for the ABC, worked with games projects at the ACMI and dabbled as an international academic. Rob spends the rest of his time on video art and generally being a cosmopolitan nerd.

## David May

David is a 12 year veteran of the games industry , working on every major console since the Dreamcast. Included in his 15 released games is the multi million selling, PS3 launch title, Motorstorm.

## Ben McKenzie

Ben McKenzie is an actor, scientician, comedian, feminist, improviser, geek, voiceover artist, gamer, presenter, nerd and ginger. 'One of Melbourne's Kings of Geek Comedy' (Chortle AU), Ben has written and performed comedy science lectures as the Man in the Lab Coat, Museum Comedy tours in Melbourne and Sydney, sketches for The Anarchist Guild Social Committee and political stand-up for Political Asylum. He is also one of the creators of Channel 31 variety show Planet Nerd and monthly improvised Dungeons & Dragons show Dungeon Crawl. Ben's favourite dinosaur is Stegosaurus.

## Andrew McMillen

Andrew McMillen is a freelance journalist based in Brisbane, Australia. His work has been published in Rolling Stone Australia, The Weekend Australian, Qweekend, Mess+Noise, The Vine, The Big Issue, triple j mag, The Courier-Mail, Australian Penthouse, IGN Australia and BrisbaneTimes.com.au.

He was first published in Brisbane street press Rave Magazine in June 2007. His first passion was writing about music, which has since been superseded by an interest in pursuing feature journalism — although he's still a regular live music reviewer.

Andrew co-organised the independent music conference UnConvention Brisbane in 2010 and 2011. He was the Queensland ambassador for National Young Writers' Month 2011, where he was charged with coordinating three public events in Brisbane and his hometown of Bundaberg. These events — which featured notable writers and journalists such as John Birmingham, Matthew Condon and Trent Dalton — were attended by a combined total of 200 young Queensland writers.

## Florian 'Floyd' Mueller

Florian 'Floyd' Mueller directs the Exertion Games Lab (exertiongameslab.org) at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in Melbourne, Australia. The Exertion Games Lab investigates the design of exertion games, these are digital games that require physical effort, in order to understand the opportunities of combining technology, play and the human body; in short, where gaming and sports meet. This research is situated within a broader interaction design agenda that supports people's values such as an active and healthy life. Floyd has most recently been a Fulbright Visiting Scholar at Stanford University, having worked on the topic of exertion games now across four continents, including at organizations such as the MIT Media Lab, Microsoft Research, Media Lab Europe, Fuji-Xerox Palo Alto Laboratories and Xerox Parc. Previously in Australia, he has worked at the University of Melbourne and the Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization

(CSIRO), where he led the Connecting People team of 12 researchers.

## Luke Muscat

Luke Muscat is a lead designer at Halfbrick, and the creator the smash-hit iPhone games Fruit Ninja and Monster Dash. In earlier projects he has worked as lead designer on DS and PSP games, with popular licenses such as Marvel and Avatar: The Last Airbender.

Over the past 18 months, Halfbrick games under Luke's direction have been downloaded over 35 million times.

## Thuyen Nguyen

Thuyen Nguyen was a professional games designer who worked at several Melbourne games studios, all of which (by sheer co-incidence) no longer exist. His credits cover a wide range of genres, with titles including Transformers, AFL Premiership, Le Mans 24 Hours, and Heroes Over Europe. Now working outside the industry, his homebrew games and apps development has been featured on Kotaku, Joystiq and Destructoid.

## Conor O'Kane

Conor O'Kane is an independent game developer and lecturer at RMIT university.

## Henrik Pettersson

Henrik Pettersson is a fearless games warrior with Viking heritage. While on a journey of digital loot and plunder, he travelled from Sweden and arrived on the sunny shores of Australia and decided that this was the place to explore his passion for games. He recklessly ventured forth and designed the hit indie game "Up Down Ready" which won the Freeplay "Best Game Design" award. After this mighty victory he joined The Voxel Agents.

## Ben Pobjie

Ben Pobjie is a writer and comedian who currently writes about TV for the Age, politics for New Matilda, and whatever pops into his head anywhere else he can find. He's the author of the books Superchef and Surveying the Wreckage, co-host of the podcast Gather Around Me, and a father of approximately three.

### Trevor Powell

Trevor Powell has fourteen years experience as a programmer in the local game industry, making games for the PlayStation 2, PSP, Dreamcast, Wii, XBox 360, and PlayStation 3. During those years, he has worked for Melbourne House, Atari, Krome Studios, Iron Monkey Studios, and as an independent developer.

### Scott Reismanis

Scott Reismanis is an entrepreneur and the founder of DesuraNET, a network of websites focused on the development and distribution of PC games which includes ModDB (and later IndieDB). Today ModDB is the largest website for players and developers who want to create and play something different, counting over 2.5 million unique visitors each month with 500,000 registered developers.

In 2009 he launched Desura a digital distribution service for PC gamers. Desura provides an " app store" like interface, with free and paid for content from publishers, available for gamers to buy and play.

### Matthew Riley

Matthew Riley is a lecturer in Animation and Interactive Media at RMIT whose interests include games, realtime technologies, design, data visualisation, generative art and networked media.

He has exhibited in Australia and internationally and his work has been featured in publications such as IdN Magazine, HOW magazine, Architectural Review and RealTime Arts. He has spoken at venues and events such as the Net Zapping Festival in France, The London College of Printing, Japans NHK and The Australian Centre for the Moving Image.

### Jens Schroeder

Dr. Jens Schroeder's research interests mainly lie in the history of digital games and the roles they play in different societies. A field he first explored in his German Masters thesis which explored the history of digital games in East Germany and how they helped to support the regime. In 2005 he moved to Australia to acquire his Master in Arts and Media from Griffith University. His doctoral thesis deals with the differences in perception of mass media in Germany and Australia and how these differences relate to modes of distinction. The thesis is the first social history of gaming in both countries. Jens acts as the Academic Coordinator for the Sydney campus of Qantm and lectures in game design.

## Stephan Schutze

With over a decade of experience in the games industry, Stephan Schütze now focuses on his own company Sound Librarian. Creating sound effects libraries, audio based games and apps and audio educational resources is the ongoing work of Schutze's focus on highlighting the importance of quality audio

## Aaron Styles

Aaron Charcoal Styles is an independent game developer. After working as a professional on three successful games as a designer, fate intervened to push him towards independent development. In the intervening three years he has developed eight games and numerous prototypes, over a variety of platforms. His games have been featured in many places, including print magazines in Russia, blogs in America and competitions in China.

## Andy Symons

Lead Designer with over 10 years of game design experience. Rose out of the primordial design soup at Atari Melbourne House to work on Men In Black: Alien Escape (PS2/ GC), Grand Prix Challenge(PS2), Transformers(PS2) and Test Drive Unlimited(PS2). Evolved into a Lead on Heroes Over Europe (PS3/ 360) at Transmission Games. Reached a higher level of consciousness at Big Ant designing AFL Live (PS3/ 360).

## Joe Tabor

Joe is the Director of Melbourne-based game developer, Fiasco Studios. Fiasco is currently working on 'Peleda', a new online game, based on a world created by Nathan and Luke Jurevicius ('Scarygirl', 'Figaro Pho').

With 11 years working in Australia and Canada for EA Montreal, Torus Games, IR Gurus and Infinite Interactive, Joe has gained considerable industry experience in a variety of roles, including Lead Artist, Art Manager and Producer.

## Drew Taylor

Drew Taylor has a passion for videogame culture and a broad range of experience in international games publishing, marketing and journalism. He has over ten years experience as a film and game reviewer and features writer, was responsible for the game culture magazine JumpButton, and frequently experiments with games writing and design across a variety of mediums.

## Lubi Thomas

Since 2005 Lubi has curated The Block New Media Exhibition Space located at QUT Precincts, Brisbane. Lubi has been working locally, nationally and internationally on large-scale new media programs and on a diverse range of digital media creative projects. She is responsible for developing the exhibi-

tions and the extensive public program schedules that scaffold both the program and engage with the Precinct's local communities and emergent creative community hubs. Since 2007 Lubi has developed an ever-growing curatorial intern program, working with both under and post graduate students, with a curatorial focus on the digital media terrain. Lubi consults in this field; is a 'Peer' for Australia Council for the Arts; is currently on a research consultancy at State Library of Queensland (SLQ), and has her own collaborative art practice: DavisThomas.

## Vanessa Toholka

Vanessa describes her job differently whenever she's asked. Current explanations include: techno librarian, digital producer, knowledge management consultant, and woman friday. She currently works for a law firm, but previously spent five years working in New Media & Digital Services at the ABC.

Vanessa is also a volunteer broadcaster at community radio station Triple R, and contributes to the Byte Into It program. At various times in her misspent youth, Vanessa has known the key combo to Chun-Li's butterfly-kick, where the secret levels are in Super Mario Bros, and how to recognise luxury cars just from their dashboard design — thank you Test Drive. Her modest gamer ambitions are to play Tetris without dreaming about it afterwards, and to achieve a save-free ascension in NetHack.

## Leena van Deventer

Leena van Deventer is a games writer from Melbourne that confesses she "frolics through life looking for ways to be playful". Preferring to associate herself more with the term "play-er" than "gamer", she calls play the thread that has constantly weaved itself through her life. Leena was previously the Indie Games Section Editor at Resolution Magazine in the UK before their merge with BeefJack.com, and currently works freelance writing both for and about games. She is also the games correspondent for Melbourne's Tech Talk Radio, and an Associate Producer at Freeplay this year. She feels being a parent has sharpened her own views on games and play as the honesty of children cuts through even the greatest intentions and the best-laid-out plans.

*"The Girl in the Gas Mask"* – Anushka De Mel
Bachelor of Arts (Games Graphic Design) graduate

S4046

# A CAREER IN VIRTUAL REALITY

Discover the captivating world of games and animation at RMIT.

Mentored by leading designers and animators, you will learn to develop exciting new digital worlds with rich characters and environments.

You'll grow into a skilled designer and games expert while learning the history and theory of this evolving field through collaborative and creative studio work.

Programs are available at diploma, degree and postgraduate levels.

**>  For more information visit the website.**

**www.rmit.edu.au/gamesanimation**

**RMIT**
UNIVERSITY