

Robert Kneen

PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENT ARTIST

Edinburgh, Scotland

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Portfolio: www.robertkneen.com

I am a professional 3D artist that has been working in the video games industry for over 16 years.

I have worked on and shipped notable cutting edge projects that I'm incredibly proud of, such as Grand Theft Auto 5, Forza Horizon 3 and Project Gotham Racing 4.

All positions required an extensive knowledge of architecture, space, colour psychology, lighting, composition, as well as an ability to meet strict deadlines to a high standard while also delivering on performance.

I feel my varied and extensive experience has given me a wide range of flexible skills and knowledge to bring to any company.

My interests and expertise exist in art, design and architecture. My goal has always been to be involved in interesting projects and to push myself creatively.

I am currently a Principal Environment Artist at Build a Rocket Boy working on a very exciting new project: MindsEye

Previous Positions

Principal Environment Artist

Edinburgh
Oct 2018 - Present

Build A Rocket Boy

Principal Environment Artist working on Everywhere using Unreal Engine. Currently under NDA.

Primarily on the MindsEye project for over five years now. Also worked on Everywhere in the early stages.

My duties have spanned across everything from Environment Conceptualisation, Whitebox Blockouts, Lighting, Material Creation, Gameplay and Final Quality Benchmarking for release-quality environments, from the Large Scale to the Macro Scale.

Also worked on the Teaser Trailer which can be viewed on my main page.

Senior Environment Artist

Remote
May 2017 - Oct 2018

Freelance

Worked as a freelancer for a year and a half in a remote capacity working with the likes of Team 6 in Netherlands and Slightly Mad Studios in London working on various art assets for multiple titles.

Main Tools used: 3DS MAX, Photoshop, Substance Painter, Substance Designer, Unreal Engine.

Lead Environment Artist

Leamington Spa, UK
Oct 2015 - May 2017

Playground Games

Environment Lead at Playground Games.

Helped form the Australia-based world map in simple white-box form and then led a team of contractors to fully realise the world during production, delivering the studio's first ever 90+ rated game and unprecedented sales success. This was then immediately followed by the well-received Expansion environment Blizzard Mountain in which we added snow for the first time. We then released the Hot Wheels Expansion which once again presented its own unique challenges which were overcome by our very small in-house team in a very short turnaround. For all three projects I set examples of the work myself which others would then follow and replicate allowing for transference of skills and a smooth production. As a Lead it was also my responsibility to identify and solve performance issues, delivering the highest quality whilst maintaining a solid frame-rate.

Completed Projects:

Forza Horizon 3

Forza Horizon 3: Blizzard Mountain

Forza Horizon 3: Hot Wheels

Environment Artist

Rockstar North

Edinburgh, UK
Mar 2011 - Oct 2015

Main duties:

Key artistic creation/modification/caretaking of blocks of the Vinewood Hills, Hollywood Boulevard, Downtown, Storm Drains, Industrial and Mirror Park areas. This involved creation of building meshes and textures mainly in 3DS MAX, road maintenance, terrain sculpting and texturing, water flow manipulation and placement of all props and procedural elements.

For GTAV: Next Gen many textures and meshes were re-authored and prop placement revisited, as well as creation of new shaders for grass along with new VFX placement were all added to create an even more rich and diverse living world. Other tasks involved creating seamless LODs, optimising collision for peak performance and correct VFX generation, including general bug fixing.

Completed Projects: 2014 - Grand Theft Auto V: Next Gen (Playstation 4/XBox One/PC)
2013 - Grand Theft Auto V (Playstation 3, Xbox 360)
Main Tools used: 3DS MAX, ZBrush, Photoshop.

Environment Artist

Liverpool, UK
Feb 2007 - Feb 2011

Bizarre Creations

Duties included:

Environment asset creation including modelling, texturing, lighting, materials and LODs.

Gameplay asset creation (destructible objects, collision, roadside barriers, navigational aids, track surfaces etc).

Pre-Production conceptualisation.

City design and organisation for in-house teams and outsource studios, including providing feedback.

Photography and reference gathering.

Completed Projects:

2009 - James Bond Blood Stone (Playstation 3, Xbox 360, PC)

2008 - Blur (Playstation 3, Xbox 360, PC)

2006 - Project Gotham Racing 4 (Xbox 360)

Main tools used: Maya, ZBrush, Photoshop

Visualisation Artist

Manchester, UK
Oct 2005 - Feb 2007

Image Foundry Studios

I began my career in Architectural Visualisation in 2005 at Image Foundry Studios, which primarily involved creating realistic images and animations from CAD plans or from photo reference, including modelling, texturing, lighting, rendering and final touches.

Duties included modelling, texturing, lighting and rendering models, of various sizes followed by final touches applied via Photoshop or After Effects for high profile housing companies and various other 3D Design companies.

Main tools used: 3DS Max (Mental Ray as main renderer, V-Ray and Brazil also used), Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe After Effects, Adobe Premiere.

Education

BSc Computer & Video Games 2:1

Manchester, UK
Sep 2002 - Jun 2005

University Of Salford

Studied all aspects of professional production of assets and meeting deadlines.

Art, Environment Design and Project Management were key modules.

Art modules consisted of life drawing classes, composition, colour psychology, lighting, rendering techniques, and technical drawing.

Fundamental tools were 3DS Max, Adobe Photoshop and Unreal Engine. The final year involved working with a small team to create fully operational prototype of our 3rd Person shooter 'Flux', which combined gameplay elements from our favourite arcade games such as Time Crisis and Space Harrier, using the Unreal engine.

Current Project

MindsEye

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