

HEATHER N GUNN

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Veteran game design leader with a broad skill set and knack for distilling fun on any platform

SKILLS

Game vision, communication, and prototyping; economies, spreadsheets, mentoring, player community, character design, PvP balance, player journey, complex systems, wordsmithing, scripting, data analysis, storytelling, creative direction

KEY CREDITS

Power Rangers: Battle for the Grid, City of Heroes, Dragon Age Legends, Heroes of Dragon Age, Dungeon Keeper

EXPERIENCE – Video Games

[Redacted] – Founder and Primary Creative, 2023-2024

- Conceiving and experimenting on a **new genre**, the Open Legacy Action RPG. **OLARPGs** are hybrids of Open World RPGs and Roguelikes: each run impacts the world and contributes towards the long term progress.
- Creating (**all Design, Art, Code, Sound, Music, Planning**, etc) the world's very first Open Legacy Action RPG: *Guardians of Annor*. **"Saving the world one hero at a time."**
- Creating **Declarative Content Generation** systems to generate unlimited variety using specified rules and simple content guides. This uses **Procedural Generation** systems to make content based on specified demographic data.
- Wrote a faster **noise algorithm** called Gunn Noise, designed for non-analogue data requirements.
- **Designed systems** to generate **paper dolls** for 24 different playable species to generate players and NPCs, created three languages with an **auto-translation** system and dozens of additional "pidgin" versions of these languages.
- Built a unique 2.5D retro-style **rendering engine** using Game Maker Studio 2. Wrote **shaders** in OpenGL ES.

Deck Nine – Principal Game Designer and Lead Game Designer, 2023

- Collaborating with Game Director and narrative team on an unannounced **Unreal 5** episodic adventure title.
- **Prototyping game systems** that meet the needs of the game narrative and meet IP expectations.

Splash Damage – Lead Game Designer, 2020-2022

- **Led Game Design** on *Transformers: Reactivate* (in **Unreal 4/5**, PC/Console), a AAA co-op looter-shooter brawler.
- Mentored 5 direct reports and 10 more indirect reports, managing career growth, and setting expectations.
- **Drove AAA quality** across **multiple game teams** to make a First Playable still being played by execs months later.
- Fostered **ownership** across the whole team and a **healthy work/life balance** for the entire studio.

nWay – Senior Game Designer, 2017-2020

- Features, AI, writing, live ops, & scripting on *Power Rangers: Legacy Wars & Battle for the Grid* (both in **Unity**).
- Building automation while mentoring designers, analyzing data for balance and engagement, and content planning.
- Combat design, flavor text, and writer for Chun-Li Ranger and her PR:LW launch video. Chun-Li Ranger was the game's **most successful character launch** of 2019. Designed the **highly praised** accompanying **balance changes**.
- **Community engagement** on Discord, Reddit, Facebook, and Twitch to inform design and improve player morale.
- Coordinating with all teams to design economy and features for *WWE: Undefeated* (in **Unity**).

Storm8 – Principal Designer, 2014-2017

- Live ops on *Restaurant Story, Bakery Story, and Fashion Story*. Turned them around and **tripled revenue across all three titles in four months** while building automation that **reduced design overhead by 80%**
- Led design on *Dragon Story 2: The Lost Island* (in soft launch, featured in 90% of released countries)
- Economy design, progression simulation, and tuning on ***Diamond Quest!* (top 40 on iOS)**, *DS2*, and other titles
- **Mentored over a dozen designers** on over a dozen invest/express and puzzle titles across the studio

BioWare / Electronic Arts – Lead Designer, 2011-2014

- Designed content and features for *Dragon Age Legends* while leading 3 designers and consulting on other titles
- Chosen to lead design and prototyping efforts at the new studio for ***Dungeon Keeper, Heroes of Dragon Age* (top 40 grossing on both Android and iOS)** (in **Unity**) with a team of 5 designers
- The ***Dungeon Keeper* prototype tested higher than any previous internal EA prototype**

Paragon Studios / NCSoft – Designer, 2008-2010

- Created and placed world spawns, built mission maps, designed new zones, wrote AI behaviors in *City of Heroes*
- Built the new Praetorian Zone Events, scaling large scale multistage events with meaningful player choices
- Designed and implemented the **first time user experience** for *Going Rogue*, the new standard tutorial for *CoH*
- Conceptualized **The Bucket**, the secret reward system for tracking player contribution in *City of Heroes* raid events

(continued on reverse)

Santa Cruz Games – Lead Designer, 2008

- Wrote the GDD for *Igor: The Game* for the Wii/PC and **led a small team to ship on a tight schedule** (5 months)
- Designed and implemented level designs, character combat, player controls, pickups, and boss encounters
- Prototyped new game ideas and wrote design documents for other titles to pitch to publishers

Secret Level / Sega – Level Designer, then Design Specialist for Tech Art, 2007

- Specified and designed GLEE, the in-Maya scripting language used on *Golden Axe: Beast Rider* and *Iron Man*
- Updated design wiki documentation and held regular training sessions on new designer tool features
- Created level designs in Microsoft Word, on paper, and in Maya for *Golden Axe: Beast Rider*
- Drafted early design for player abilities, general game mechanics for beast combat, and the magic system
- **Mentored and trained entry-level designers** on the tool chain and game design fundamentals

The 3DO Company – Level Designer II, 2000-2003

- Completed and released: *Portal Runner* and *Sarge's War*, won Star Performer award for work on *Portal Runner*
- Brainstormed, conceptualized, and composed game design docs on *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*
- Spiced and greyboxed levels in 3DS Max; **supervised and trained level designers** working on those levels

EXPERIENCE – Tabletop Games

Stone Tablet Games – Founder and Design Director, 2005-Present

- Designed the 300-page tabletop roleplaying game *Aspect* (an **epic classless fantasy RPG**) and 2 demo adventures
- Distilled *Aspect Prime*, a grand unified theory that simplified *Aspect's* virtues to 200 pages and 4 custom dice
- Designed and orchestrated printing, testing, art, and production of several tabletop games

TOOLS

Expert with: Google Sheets, Photoshop, Game Maker Studio 2, LibreOffice, Word/Excel, TIC-80, Lua, ArtRage

Proficient with: UnrealEd 1/2/4/5, OpenGL ES Shaders, Python, Unity, Scrum, Miro, Github, Jira, Vegas Video, FL Studio ActionScript, Maya, MELscript, 3ds Max, VikkiScript, Perforce, FileMaker Pro, Visual Sourcesafe, HTML, Wiki Script

EDUCATION

The Art Institute of California-San Francisco, CA (AiCASF) 2003-2006,

Bachelor of Science: Game Art and Design - 3.9 GPA

AWARDS / HONORS / SCHOLARSHIPS

President's List (4.0 average) three quarters in a row at AiCASF, Dean's List (3.7+ average) every quarter at AiCASF

HOBBIES

Collecting and Playing thousands of Videogames and Boardgames, Running my Homebrew Tabletop RPGs, Automation and Simulation in Spreadsheets, Teaching Sword Fighting, Prototyping Digital and Physical Games, Digital Painting

RECOMMENDATIONS (more available here: www.linkedin.com/in/heather-gunn)

*"Heather is an **extremely talented creative** and an incredibly dedicated game designer.*

*She lives and breathes games – pure and simple. She put her all into every project I worked on with her or witnessed her working on. She is an **excellent mentor** and goes way out of her way to assist and instruct junior designers. She truly cares about her work, passion, art, and craft. She's that designer that goes home after a long day of design... just to then design some more for herself at home! She is a **spreadsheet master and systems guru** and I can't think of a time where I needed help that she didn't have the exact answer I needed. I really, really hope I get to work alongside her again."*

Connor Scott, Senior Game Designer, Storm8

*"Heather joined the live phase of Dragon Age Legends to design content, and immediately made the story and game her own. Heather did an excellent job of creating **exciting new content**, improving the existing content and taking a strong mentorship role with our design interns. She did an outstanding job of becoming a part of the game's community, listening, communicating, reacting quickly to their problems and doing a **top notch job of community driven design.**"*

Ethan Levy, Producer, Bioware Social

*"...She has always been **devoted to making the user experience as fun as possible**, even to the point of encouraging me and coworkers from other departments to share our thoughts on what could be improved upon in the game. She always took an active interest in my own projects at work and had valuable input readily available.*

*Heather **lives and breathes game design** even after hours, having created many card and board games on her own initiative. If Heather is awake, and breathing, she is 99% likely to be doing something game-related. As her coworker, I always found her consistent passion for design to be refreshing and infectious!"*

Keetsie Braz da Cunha, VFX Artist, Paragon Studios