

Gerald Poon – Principal Game Designer

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ABOUT ME

Self-motivated Principal Game Designer with over 20 years' experience. I am exceptionally well-rounded; having worked on virtually all facets of game design throughout my career, with a specialisation in levels, combat and mechanics. I have a proven track record in crafting engaging player experiences, and have consistently led multi-disciplinary teams to deliver results that exceed milestone goals.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Ninja Theory – Principal Game Designer: 2023 – 2026

- Principal game designer on 'Hellblade II' and 'Senua', focussing on levels and player experience.
- Worked closely with other departments to drive game vision.
- Rapid prototyping of psychologically themed game mechanics and puzzles. Conceptualised many foundational gameplay elements.
- Built large sections of our semi-open game world in engine, from initial block-outs to leading workflow to implement full art pass.
- Pacing and flow; balancing exploration, puzzles, combat, narrative moments and downtime.
- Encounter design and placement, ensuring combat scenarios feel varied and engaging.
- Mentoring and career guidance for other designers within the studio.

Hi-Rez - Principal Game Designer: 2021 - 2022

- Principal combat designer on melee focussed PvP title 'Divine Knockout'.
- Worked with cross discipline directors to drive high level game direction.
- Directed the core combat experience; moment to moment combat feel, progression, upgrades and long-term mastery.
- Character kit design, from concept to hands-on prototyping, implementation and polish in Unreal Engine 5.
- Multiplayer balancing, identifying and tuning outlier abilities and heroes.
- Led daily playtesting and feedback sessions.

Ninja Theory - Lead Game Designer: 2020 - 2021

- Lead game designer lead on 'Hellblade II'.
- Planning and reviewing work across a multi-disciplinary team consisting of designers, animators, programmers, and audio/FX artists.
- Led daily reviews with the creative director and studio head.
- Heavily involved in recruitment; conducting interviews and reviewing design tests.
- Mentoring and guiding the career progression of our junior designers.

Ninja Theory - Senior Game Designer: 2015-2020

- Senior designer on melee focussed PvP title 'Bleeding Edge';
- Designed six of the eight of maps in the game.
- Contributed to character kit prototyping, combat balancing and player progression.
- Took responsibility for critical systems with short timeframes and constrained resources, such as designing and implementing Bot AI with minimal code support.
- Media relations, game promotion and press interviews at events such as E3, Gamescom and XO19.

Ninja Theory - Game Designer: 2013-2015

- Rapid prototyping of game mechanics for a cancelled action-adventure title.
- Combining prototype mechanics to develop several vastly different game demos over the course of the project.
- Presented game demos to various stakeholders, including Nintendo of Japan.

THQ - Senior Game Designer: 2010-2011

- Combat, Puzzles, Levels, AI, and Camera design.
- Worked on 'Marvel Avengers', a cancelled AAA multiplayer action title.
- Go to guy for problem solving. Frequently assigned to work on systems that required completion or major fixes in extremely short turnaround times.

THQ - Game Designer: 2005-2010

- Mechanics, Combat and Level Design.
- Quest Design and NPC Dialogue.
- Shipped titles on PS2, PS3, Gamecube, Wii, Xbox/360.

KEY TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Unreal Engine 4 and 5 (including Blueprints and C++ API)
- C++, Java
- Android / iOS development
- Blender 3D (modelling, rigging, animation)
- Inkscape, Photoshop, Gimp

GAME CREDITS

- Senua (Cancelled)
- Senua's Saga: Hellblade II (2024)
- Divine Knockout (2022)
- Bleeding Edge (2020)
- Unannounced Nintendo project (cancelled) (2015)
- Marvel Avengers (cancelled) (2011)

- Megamind (2010)
- Avatar: The Last Airbender (movie) (2010)
- Avatar: The Last Airbender: Into the Inferno (2008)
- Avatar: The Last Airbender: The Burning Earth (2007)
- Avatar: The Last Airbender (2006)
- Spongebob: Lights, Camera, Pants (2005)

EDUCATION

Qantm College: 2003-2004

- Bachelor of Interactive Entertainment, Game Programming.
- Graduated as Valedictorian of the combined Programming and Art degrees.

University of Melbourne: 1999-2002

- Bachelor of Information Systems.