

# Education for Games Games for Education

Women in Games 2008

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The School of Design

UCLAN

Preston

Lancashire

[www.gamescourse.co.uk](http://www.gamescourse.co.uk)

What skills are needed to work in the games industry?

Are they provided by higher education, and are they options taken up by women?

# A talk based upon my experience

- As a female art student
- As a background artist in Children's TV production
- As an environmental artist in the Games Industry
- And recently as a Senior Lecturer in Games Design at UCLAN.

# Acquiring the skills

- As an art student in the late 70's, I learned the basis for these skills in an **incidental** manner
- My training and experience in children's TV then **prepared** me for a role as an artist in the games industry.

# In comparison...today...

- Skills for working in the games industry are now more immediately **accessible** through Higher Education.
- Choices for a career in games are now more **intentional** than incidental
- Students have a much more **structured** and considered curriculum which is specially **designed** for their aspirations as games designers and for industry.

# Skills required in the games industry...

- I plan to **track** my career path briefly from my own experience of higher education to
- How I came to work as a digital artist on many successful games.
- To show how my experience of the games design industry can be an example to other female games students, **encouraging** them to succeed.

# A pathway...

- I will show examples from my early years in children's animation for Thames TV...
- to an “**apparent**” change of direction where I started work with a group of brilliant, young games developers, Traveller's Tales Ltd.

- I found that **gender** and age difference between myself and my colleagues was never an issue.
- In my opinion the main issue surrounding women in the games industry is **spreading the word** that it's a great place for anyone to work, boys and girls alike.

- Comparing my **early** experience in games with that of the graduates we teach today...
- Perhaps we can say early games developers were like “**explorers**” and today's games students are “**colonizing** the once uncharted territory”.

# Unknown territory

- I followed a path into an industry which didn't **exist** when I studied for my degree.
- My path into games was not certain and I was unsure of the **opportunities** available.
- The skills required for use in new technology were also **uncharted** and waiting to be explored.

# Unknown territory

- Today's path into the games industry is now a more **certain** route for those who display talent and have studied an appropriate games design course
- The industry is still **growing** and there are plenty of **opportunities** for students with skill who are prepared to work hard
- The industry is now more **established** with a history of it's own which gives a more definitive list of skills required for students to succeed.

# Background



**Art College**  
*Study at Manchester  
Polytechnic*

*First class BA (hons)  
Graphic design with  
Illustration,*

*Post Graduate  
Certificate in Education*

*Focus on drawing skills,  
story telling, painting,  
networking and  
understanding the market.*



# *Time in Industry*

*Specialist skills in background design and artwork for animation including watercolours and many other media.*

*3D digital artwork and graphics for games.*



# *Cosgrove Hall Films Ltd. Thames TV*

*Background artist –Illustrator-Designer*

*Wind in the Willows*

*Duckula.*

*Dangermouse.*

*Bug Bears. Truckers.*

*Victor and Hugo. The B.F.G.*

*The Fool, the World and the Flying ship.*

## *Freelance Background Artist.*

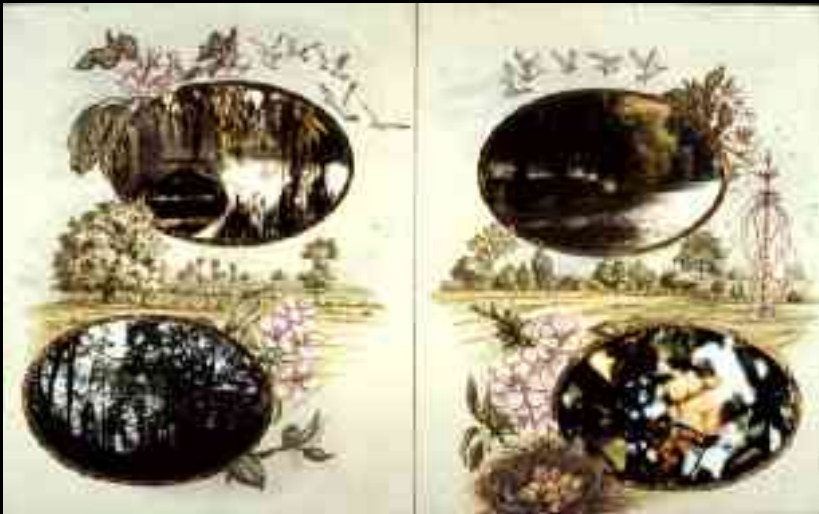
*Avenger Penguins; Cosgrove Hall/Thames TV*

*Legend of Lochnagar*

*H.R.H. Prince Charles. Dave Edwards Studios. BBC*



# *Cosgrove Hall Films...*



# *Cosgrove Hall Films...*



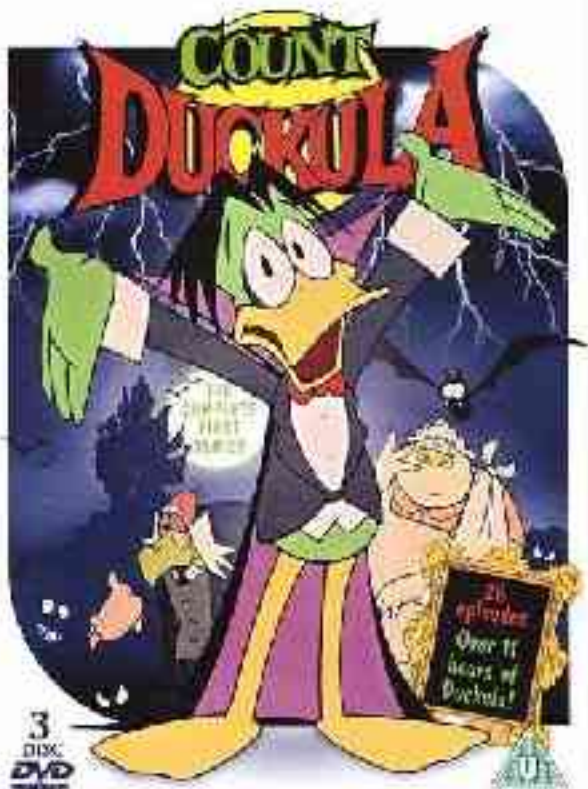


# *Cosgrove Hall ...continued*



# DANGER MUSE





*Freelance work...Prince Charles' Legend of Lochnagar*



# The Tooth Fairy



# Travellers Tales Ltd.

*Digital artist for video games*

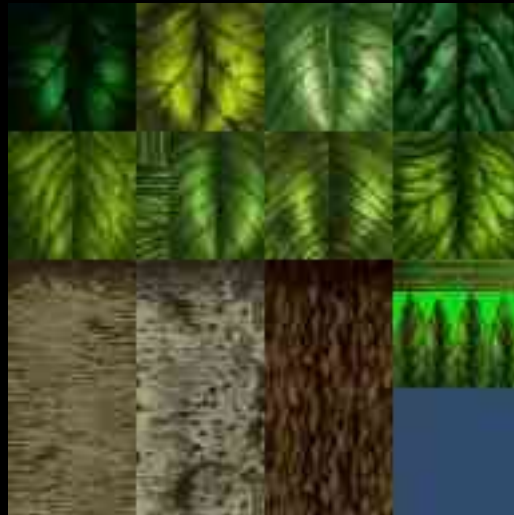
- *Mickey Mania - Disney video game*
  - *Toy Story - Disney video game.*
- *Shadow Master - Sony video game*
  - *Rascal - Sony video game.*
  - *Bugs Life.- Disney video game*
- *Sonic Racing - Sega video game.*
  - *Haven - Sony video game.*
- *Muppet Racemania.- Henson Interactive video game*
  - *Toy Story 2.-Disney video game*
  - *Buzz Lightyear.- Disney video game*
- *Crash Bandicoot the Wrath of Cortex.- Universal Studios video game*
  - *Finding Nemo.- Disney video game*
- *Lego Starwars.- Giant Entertainment video game*
- *Lego Starwars2.- T-tales video game*



# Early 90's at Traveller's Tales Ltd



# Traveller's Tales Ltd. Texturing.

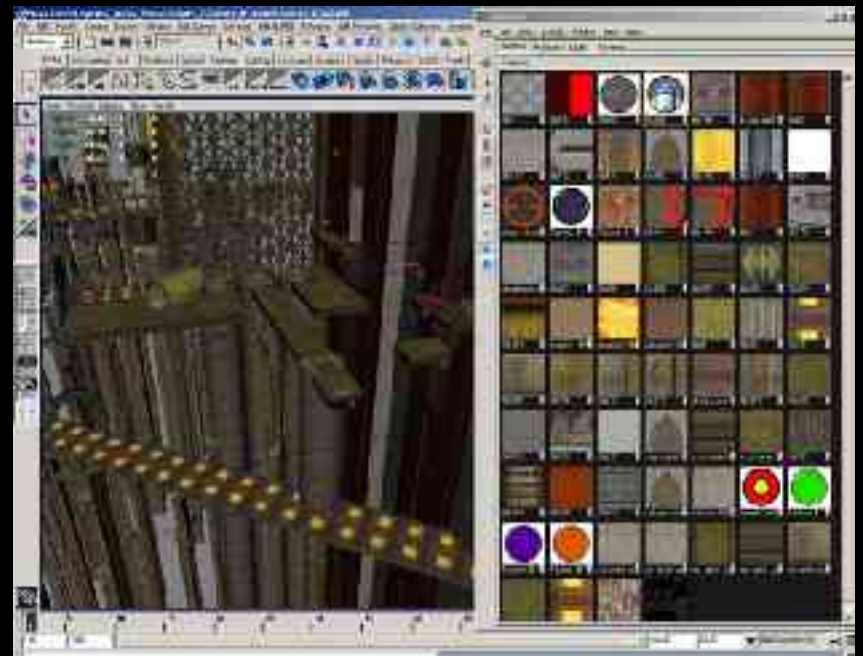
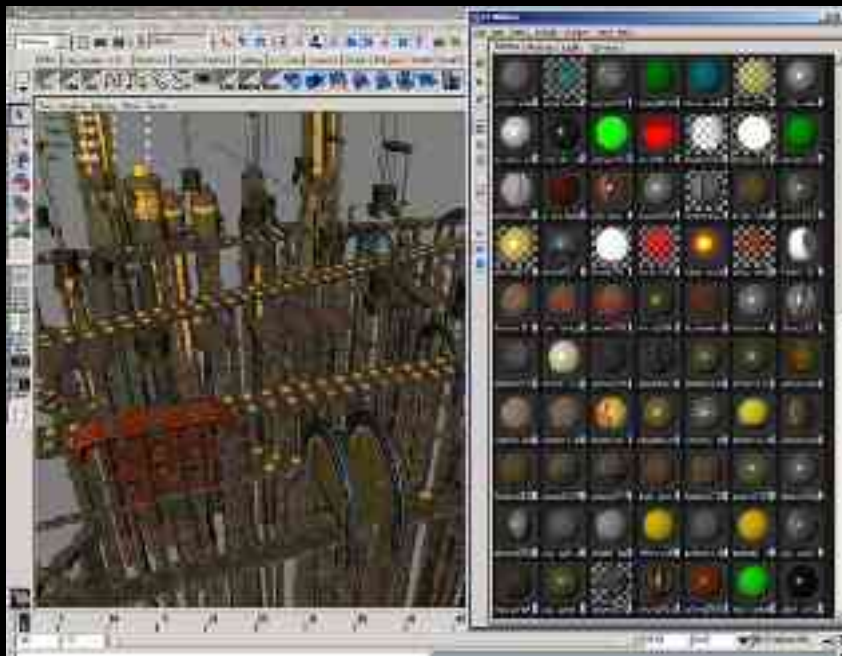
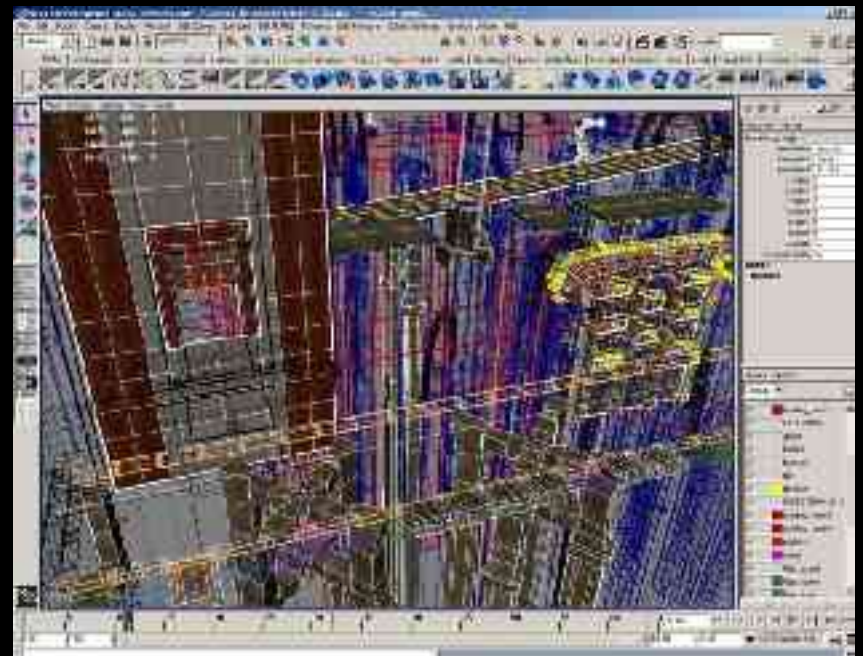
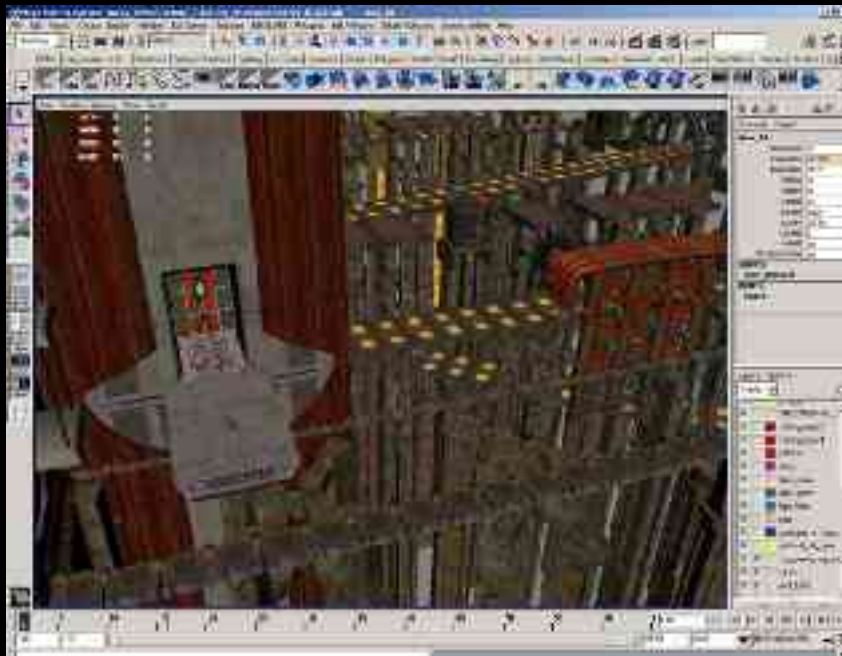


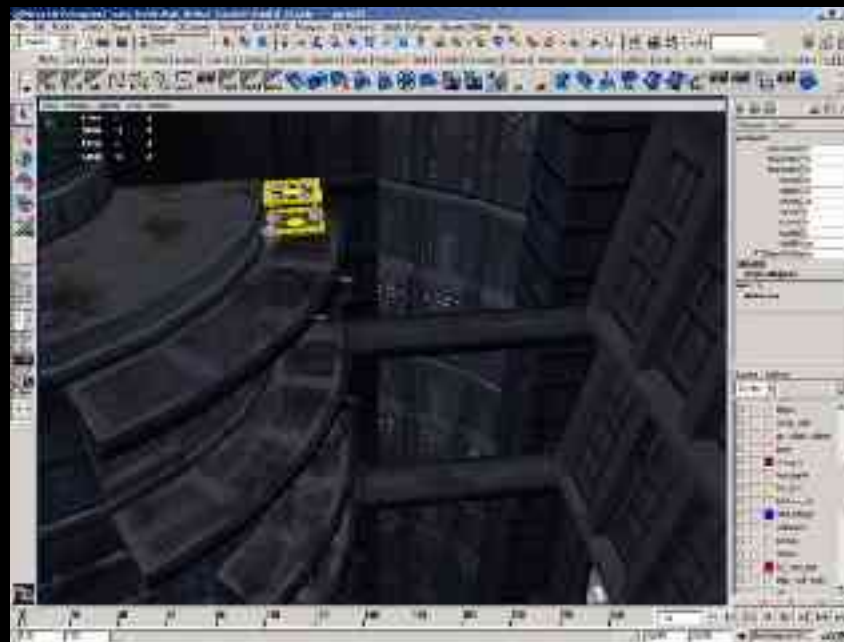
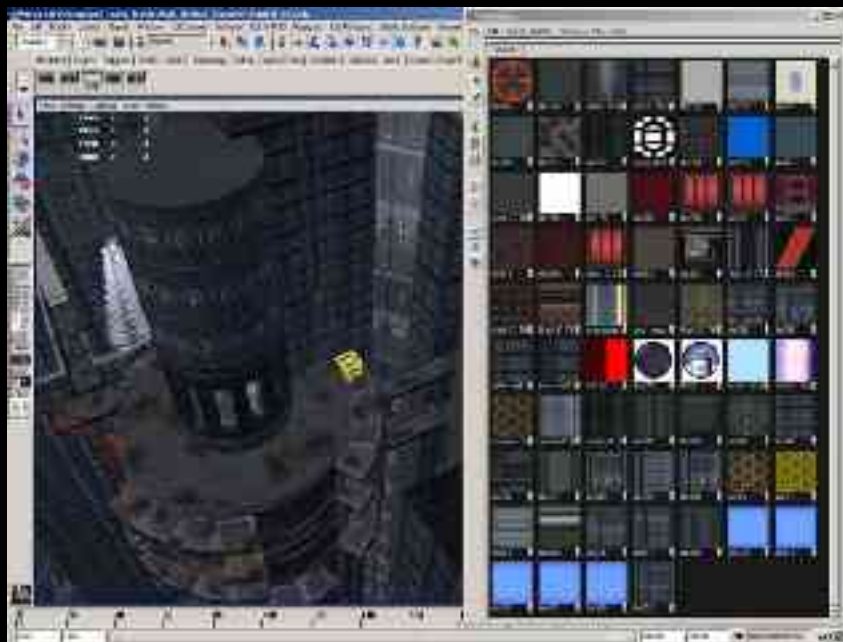
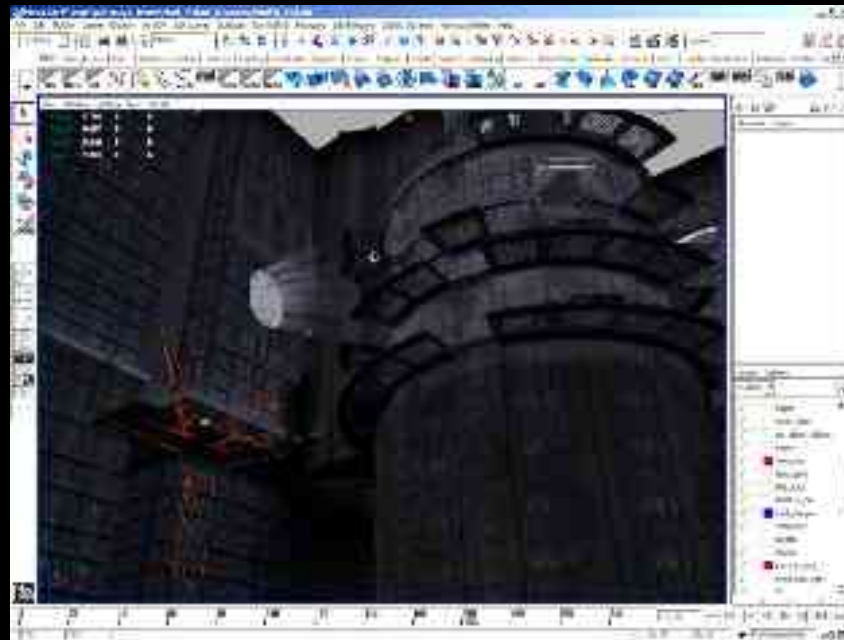
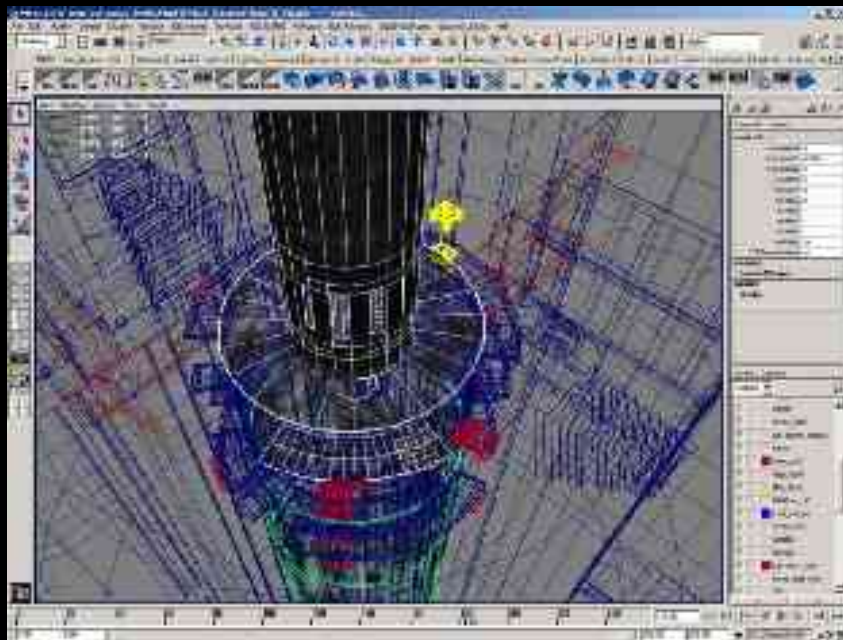
# Traveller's Tales Ltd. Modelling



# Lego Starwars







# Traveller's Tales Ltd    Lego Starwars 2



# *Traveller's Tales Ltd... Lego team*



# *Traveller's Tales... ECTS London*



*Traveller's Tales... E3... Santa Monica L.A.*



# *Traveller's Tales... Legoland, Billund, Denmark*



*And now... Games at UCLAN ... Degree Show 07*





# **BA (Hons) Games Design**

# **MA Games Design**

**Game Design • Game Art**





What is the course structure?

Simply put the course covers three main areas of activity:

***Drawing***

This ranges from sketching as an aid to creative thinking to develop initial ideas' to the production of finished concept art for publication.

***Digital modelling and Animation***

This covers the game specific requirements for developing digital assets for games.

***Game Mechanic Design***

Thinking of scenarios and subjects for games can be easy, but developing the mechanics, rules and methods by which a game is delivered is a complex task specific to the discipline.



We have a dedicated PC lab where we run mainly Autodesk Maya 8 Complete and Adobe Photoshop CS2 (The full Creative Suite)



Maya 8.5 PLE (Public Learning Edition) is available as a [free download](#) offers,

*'Almost every feature found in the full commercial version of Autodesk Maya Complete 8.5'*

Programs such as Autodesk 3D Studio Max and Adobe Premier are also available across the University network.



In addition to this we have a big pile of Wacom Intuos3 Graphics Tablets for use in the PC lab.



We are currently using Epic's 'UnrealEd' as a teaching tool for Game Design and Art Asset visualisation.



We also have a 'Lecture' and 'Drawing' Studio for non digital work which we feel is just as important.





## Staff Team

The staff team consist of a mix of staff that are skilled in design education as well as possessing significant experience of commercial games design. A range of visiting staff with educational and professional backgrounds broadens and supports the input to the student experience

Josh

Bev

Jim





## Publishers/Developers Staff have been involved with...

*Travellers Tales Ltd*

*Disney*

*Universal Studios*

*Virgin Interactive*

*Psygnosis*

*Sony*

*Henson Interactive*

*Electronic Arts*

*Warthog*

*Universal Vivendi*

*Revolution Studios*

*Acclaim*

*Warner Brothers*

*Cosgrove Hall*

*Thames TV*

*Thames and Hudson*



## A list of some BA (Hons) Games Design Graduates, employment and in what capacity

*Travellers Tales Ltd*

*Travellers Tales – Fusion*

*Travellers Tales –Slough*

*Ninja Theory LTD*

*Eurocom*

*THQ – Brisbane*

*Evolution Studios*

*Stainless Games*

*Onteca Interactive Media*

*Santoon Productions Inc*

*Concept Artist*

*Designer*

*QA Tester*

*Designer/Artist/Modeler*

*Artist/Modeler*

*Modeler/Animator*

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# Games Design Course Photos



uclan  
University of Central Lancashire

A slice of life from the BA (Hons) / MA Games Design Studio



A shot of the Drawing Studio



Students working in the PG Lab

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Working with Unreal.



Digital Picture Frames and a typical Pin-up of Student work

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#### Presentation;

A group of Year Three BA(hons) Games Design Students take part in a small 'Crit' and discuss work on the wall with Jim





Magic The Gathering

Non Digital Games are often just as important in terms of understanding 'game mechanics'

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A game of Citidel

Like other card based games out there!



Tom, a Year Three Games Design Student - Very happy with his Citidel turn



A Guitar Hero

A group of First Year BA(Hons) Game Design Students analyzing an XBox 360 Title

It is work - Honest!





A game of 'Zombies' and a bunch of 'Zombies' - on the right of the picture!

One of the Course 'Toy Cupboards'

The least messy!



Sketchwork;

Rob draws something hideous - again!



Design work in the studio.

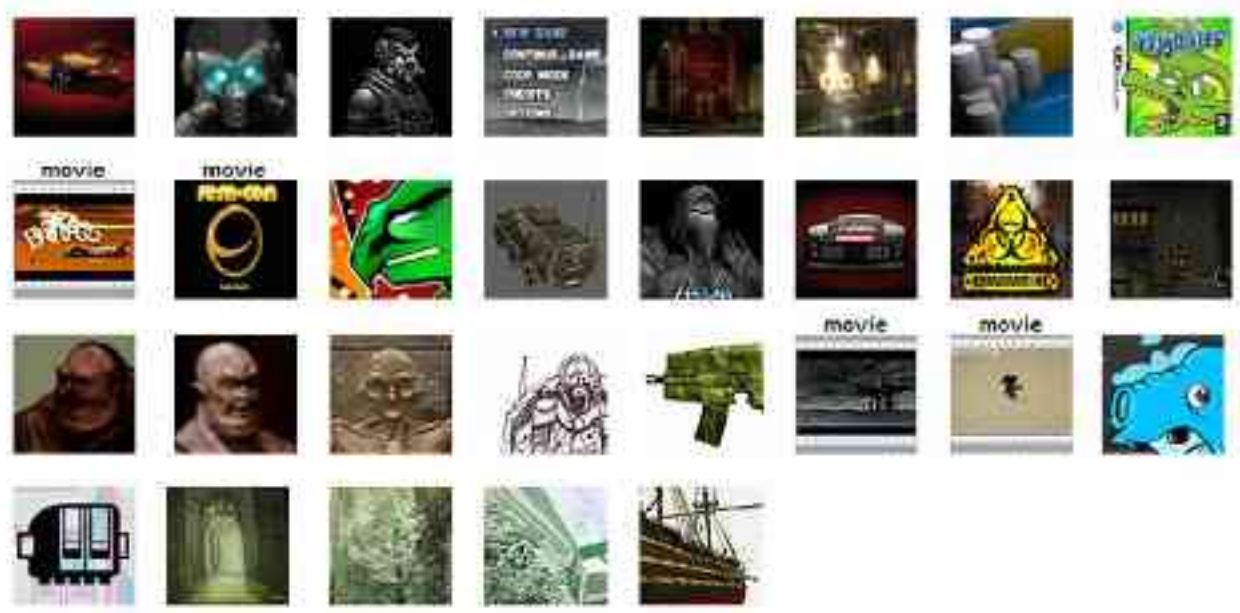






www.uclan.ac.uk/games

# Games Design Year 3 Gallery

## Game Design • Game Art

A multi-disciplinary team of female design practitioners based in the School of Design, UCLAN, have come together to explore issues surrounding gamers.





- The Games BY Girls group intends to explore the possibilities of not only a broader market but also the potential for different subjects, content and alternative **purposes** of games.
- Through **research** the group aims to gain an insight into what attracts a universal audience.
- They intend to bring their skills to bear to develop and trial such games with the long term goal of bringing them into the arena of **education**.

# Universal appeal

- With the advent of the Wii and increase in casual games, **action** based content is becoming more popular and this is attracting female players and designers.
- In next generation games, you can have freedom, power and take control or sit back and be fed a film like experience. The **emotional** aspect and storyline plays a large part in making game play meaningful.
- The superb quality of the visuals is giving a **cinematic** experience to opening sequences and cut scenes

# Opportunities for boys and girls

- We now see Animators, concept artists, game designers, modelers and musicians coming **together** happily to provide awe inspiring games.
- I believe the quality of this interactive medium will increasingly evolve until the whole thing, from music, script, cinematic storyline, action and game play are fully **integrated**.
- As more animators and artists are required for next generation titles, **female** animators and designers will begin to naturally identify the job prospects in the industry

# Girls will naturally work in games

- There has never been a more exciting time for women to enter the games design world and there are jobs out there for those with talent.
- We have seen an increase in the number of female students applying for our games design course.
- Hopefully, women like myself who have worked in the industry will mark a pathway for girls to follow.