

TOM EBNER

Art Director and Game Development

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Visionary art director and builder with 15+ years defining visual direction for games, live-service titles, and globally recognized entertainment IP. Based in Los Angeles, CA, I have established complete visual systems from scratch at multiple studios building art bibles, setting visual targets, scaling external art organizations, and aligning creative vision with production teams. Experienced directing distributed teams and offshore vendors at scale, owning style guides from brief through final execution, and presenting creative vision to investors and stakeholders with monetary results. Brings deep pipeline architecture expertise and a track record of translating ambitious creative goals into executable production workflows. Experience with working from newbies to S ranks.

CORE SKILLS

Art Direction & Visual Systems: Art Direction, Art Bibles & Style Guides, Visual Targets, IP Stewardship, Creative Vision Development

Team & Vendor Leadership: External Vendor Management, Distributed Team Leadership, Art Team Scaling, Stakeholder Alignment, Investor Presentations

Production & Pipeline: Pipeline Development from Scratch, Cross-Functional Collaboration, Asset Review & Feedback, Live Ops, Production Workflows

Tools: Adobe Photoshop, Unreal Engine (working knowledge), Maya/ZBrush (working knowledge), 2D/3D Pipelines

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Squid Games (Indie Studio) — Art Director

Remote | May 2022 – Present

- Established the complete visual identity and art direction for Jellyvale: A Match Tale from pre-production through active development defining the game's aesthetic, building its art bible, and setting visual targets across all disciplines.
- Designed and implemented the studio's art pipeline and review processes from the ground up, without inherited tools, team structure, or existing workflows.
- Lead and direct a distributed team of artists across characters, environments, UI, and FX providing clear creative direction through paintovers, written standards, and structured feedback loops.
- Collaborate daily with design and engineering to ensure visual goals align with gameplay systems and technical constraints.
- Established visual consistency standards used across all internal and external contributors.

Jam City — Art Director / Art Lead / Senior Artist

Culver City, CA | 2014 – March 2022

- Served as Art Director on Genies & Gems, a live-service title with sustained content production directing ongoing feature development, seasonal events, and visual evolution across a multi-year run.
- Art Lead on James Cameron's Avatar franchise one of entertainment's highest-profile IPs defining visual standards and directing art teams to meet the expectations of a globally recognized license.
- Created and maintained comprehensive style guides and art bibles used by both internal teams and external development partners to ensure visual consistency at scale.
- Directed external art vendors and offshore partners, providing structured feedback and maintaining quality across distributed production pipelines.
- Collaborated cross-functionally with product, engineering, and marketing leadership to align artistic vision with business objectives and stakeholder presentations.
- Mentored and developed artists across disciplines, elevating team quality and building institutional visual knowledge.

Nickelodeon Games — Senior Artist

Glendale, CA | Sept 2007 – March 2014

- Defined and maintained visual direction across multiple simultaneous web-based game titles for one of entertainment's most recognized youth brands.

- Built and enforced style guides for licensed IP ensuring brand fidelity across internal teams and external contributors.
- Produced concept art, character design, environment illustration, and animation assets for live titles.

Kung Fu Factory — Senior Artist/Concept Artist

Los Angeles, CA | June 2014 – Sept 2014

- Concept artist for Card King Dragon Wars.
- Visual direction, color scripts, and pitch materials for licensed IP — including Green Arrow, Adventure Time, and King of the Hill.

Collision Studios — Lead Artist

Santa Monica, CA | May 2014 – June 2014

- Led art direction across mobile projects with hands-on direction for a small, fast-moving team.

SELECT FREELANCE & IP WORK

Freelance art direction, concept, and illustration work across a wide range of licensed and original IP demonstrating range across character, environment, brand, and marketing contexts. Portfolio: www.tomebner.com

EDUCATION

Minneapolis College of Art and Design

BFA, Animation (Minor: Illustration)

Gnomon School of Visual Effects

Digital Painting & 3D Modeling