VIDEO GAME DESIGNER / DEVELOPER

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ファイナルファンタジーXIII

INFORMATION

- A video game designer holds a few different descriptions, though their basis is the same. They design video games. Whether it be in creating art, story concepts, or gameplay mechanics.

- Designers are involved in the pre-development stage and many designers also transition to the next stage as developers.

- Developers are the programmers, who make the games work, and the project leaders, who direct everyone to ensure the project reaches completion.

- Internships in small studios, and self-funded projects are a common part of starting out in this career.

REQUIREMENTS

- Associate's or Bachelor's in Computer Science or Art Design (depending on position)

- Graphic Design and/or Programming experience

- Business/Managerial Skills

- Creative and Logical Thinking

- Passion for Video Games

- Very-High Stress tolerance

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ESTIMATED SALARY

- $40,000 Starting Salary - $120,000+ (For both Developers and Designers)

- Indie development, otherwise known as self-publishing, is another lucrative option for this career. Small teams can post their games on Steam or sell them on their own. These typically have little to no starting salary but an infinite ceiling if the game is successful.
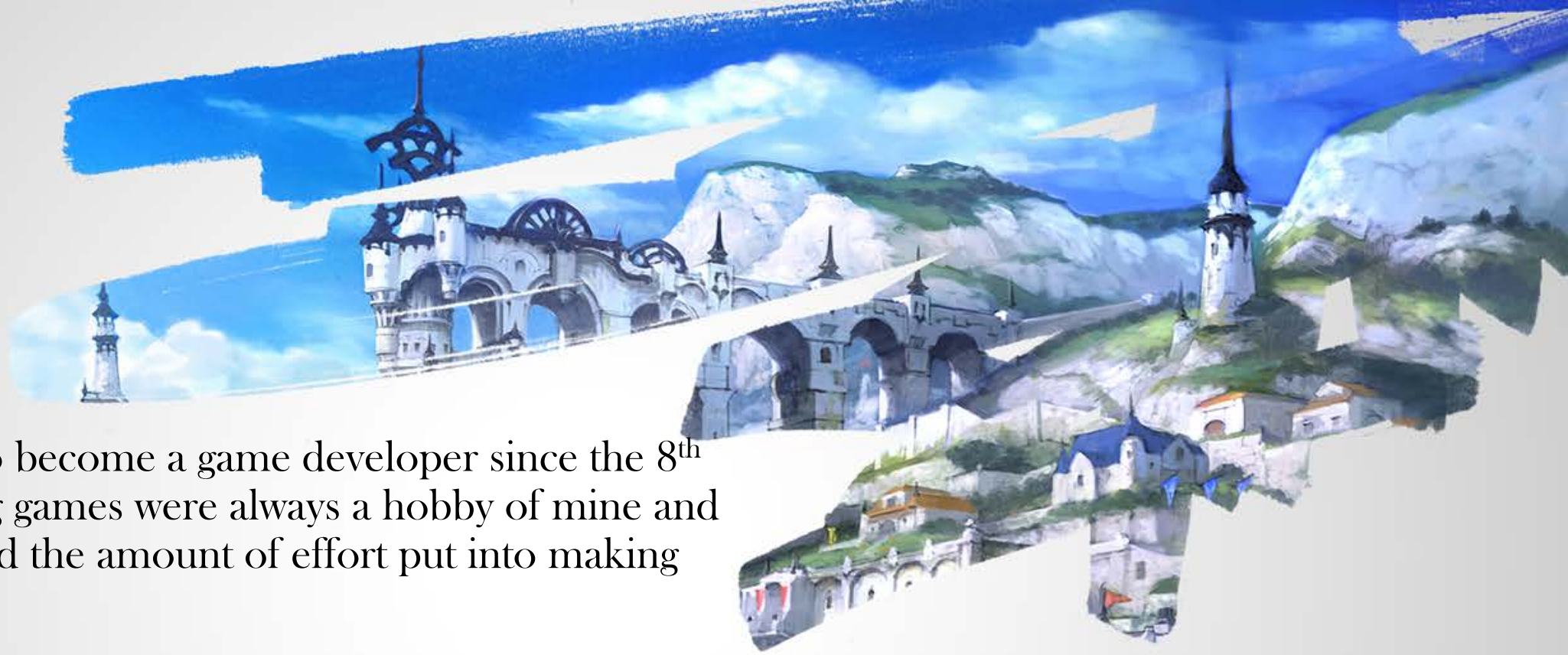
- Typically Game Developers and Designers start developing their portfolio's during or before college. Large games can take anywhere from a few months to a few years depending on development time.

- As a result the training time for this career is anywhere from 4-8 years before actually entering the workforce.

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APPEAL

- I've wanted to become a game developer since the 8th grade. Playing games were always a hobby of mine and I soon realized the amount of effort put into making them.

- Since entering high school I've worked on becoming a graphical artist and programmer, and recently entered the Software and Game Development class at ATC to better my skills.

- Currently, I'm working on 2 game development projects, both on their way to completion.

- I love the creative and logical personality you must have to be part of this community.

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PROS AND CONS

- Aside from getting to develop the games you love to play, you also get free tickets to special video game events such as E3 and PAX.

- When launching an indie studio you get complete control over what you make and have a very good chance at making it big if you put in the effort.

- A negative is the high stress environment during crunch-time. (Working overtime to make sure a game is finished on-time.)

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LOCATIONS AND COMPANIES

- D.C., New York, and Florida on the East Coast

- California, and Washington on the West Coast

- Popular companies include:

  - Square Enix (Tokyo and California)

  - Blizzard (Texas and California)

  - DICE (Sweden)

  - 343 (Washington)

  - Bethesda Softworks (Maryland)

STRENGTHS

- Game Designers and Developers must have both a logical and creative oriented mind, which is a rare trait.

- Logic takes place in the programming and management areas, whereas Creativity highlights in the concept phase and art development.

- Creativity, Logic, and Business skills are traits I pride myself on, which is why I would prefer to create my own studio and make games with a small group of trusted employees.

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INTERESTING FACTS

- The video game industry has been around since the early 60's with Pong, but exploded in popularity in the 80's with iconic titles like: Mario, Metal Gear, and Zelda.

- The game industry is quickly overtaking both the music & movie industry in terms of revenue & popularity.

- Grand Theft Auto V had a budget of $265 million, making it the most expensive game to develop ever.

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