

廖昊东 (LIAO Haodong)



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MSc in Computer Science of Copenhagen University (2020.09 - 2022.06) |

BEng in Computer Science and Technology of UESTC (2016.09 - 2020.06)

SUMMARY

Technically-proficient Game Designer with 3+ years of AAA experience at Ubisoft, contributing to Avatar: Frontiers of Pandora. Delivered end-to-end ownership for a key boss fight, elite territories, and wildlife systems - from paper design to visual scripting, tuning, and shipping. Notably drove a 300%+ performance increase in the spawn system. Known for bridging AAA open-world scale with handcrafted interaction details to build emotional resonance.

Skills: Snowdrop, UE5 (GAS/Blueprint), Unity, Godot, Emotional Experience Design, Experience Deconstruction.

CAREER

Avatar: Frontiers of Pandora (MAIN | DLC1 | DLC2 | EXPANSION)-Game Designer | Ubisoft Shanghai (2022.09 - Now)

- Rescue-Themed BOSS Fight Design (Fireback Mastodon)

- **Engineered the Emotional Curve:** Mapped the BOSS encounter's pacing to a specific sequence of beats (Caution → Tension → Vulnerability → Compassion → Relief), creating a cinematic arc rather than a repetitive combat loop.
- **Systemic Interaction:** Prototyped and implemented a puzzle-based combat to unlock the rescue finale, tuning AI behaviors to scale reactivity and difficulty dynamically using visual scripting.
- **Ludonarrative Harmony:** Crafted narrative affordances to create a moral dilemma ("defense" vs. "rescue"). Surfaced these stakes through gameplay constraints and audio-visual cues to elicit player compassion.
- **Sensory Immersion:** Collaborated with Animation, Art and Audio to convey the creature's tortured presence - using haptic pulses, camera shakes, and distressed animations - balancing the perception of fragility and threat.

- Level Design & Environmental Storytelling (Thanator & Aerial Predator Territories)

- **Level Design:** Designed 18 unique predator territories that integrated high-stakes combat into the open-world loop, creating memorable, high-difficulty encounters that drove exploration through significant challenges and rewards.
- **Environmental Storytelling:** Orchestrated environmental assets (e.g., corpse placements, wreck sites, VFX) to build silent narratives that non-verbally communicated threats, guided players to high-value resources, and directly influenced their behavior.
- **Puzzle Design:** Integrated puzzles with systemic design to offer player agency beyond combat, such as a high-risk stealth puzzle in a boss zone, and an emergent scenario where destroying environmental objects altered creature AI from hostile to neutral.

- Quest & Encounter Design

- **Zakru Painting:** Transformed a standard encounter into a multi-part narrative quest by designing a dynamic NPC interaction loop and embedding narrative hooks, converting a minor interaction into a memorable quest that drove player exploration.
- **Legendary Creature Skill:** Led the cross-functional design and implementation of a unique "mesmerizing" creature skill that temporarily reverses player controls. Created an exotic combat identity for the legendary creature, forcing players to adopt new tactics.
- **Environmental Challenge:** Designed tactical combat by creating synergies between creature and environmental hazards. Placing sound-sensitive creatures in noisy areas or charge-proficient creatures near explosives. Rewarding players for using the environments a weapon.
- **Contextual Storytelling:** Engineered a dynamic spawning system for DLC2 to tell an evolving, non-verbal story, altering wildlife AI (from peaceful to fight) based on RDA invasion levels to make the world feel reactive and visually showcase the invasion's ecological impact.

- Systems & Performance Optimization (Wildlife Spawning)

- **Maximize Encounter Rate:** Designed and implemented a predictable spawning system to guarantee consistent wildlife encounter rates, enhancing the open-world's vibrancy and providing designers with precise control over player experience and pacing.
- **Optimize Spawn System:** Boosted the wildlife spawning system's performance by over 300% by re-architecting its validation logic. This critical optimization drastically cut down team iteration times, directly accelerating the prototyping and polishing workflow.
- **Spawning Validation Pipeline:** Authored a data validation pipeline to proactively detect issues in wildlife distribution, empowering the design team to implement complex scenarios with confidence while mitigating production risks.

PROJECTS

Emotional Game Design System, EGDS - Creator

Inspired by Jenova Chen, I am developing a systematic framework to structurally design emotional player experiences. EGDS aims to provide practical design levers (narrative, gameplay, aesthetics) by deconstructing high-level emotional arcs down to the objective reasons behind subjective feelings.

Design & Analysis Blog

Actively maintains a professional blog with near-weekly posts featuring learning notes, game analysis, design thinking, and personal showcase. This practice reflects a commitment to lifelong learning by consistently documenting learnings from games, reading, and other life experiences.

Playable Demos - Developer

I have the passion and long-term commitment to achieve my goal of helping people understand themselves better :)

- 20 Years - Team Size 3 - Designer & Programmer (2026.01)

An atmospheric narrative puzzler where sound and touch are your only compass in a journey to regain bravery after loss.

- Slices of Shadows - Solo - Designer & Programmer (2025.08)

A narrative-driven game that uses shifting narrative perspectives and a plot twist to explore the theme of embracing the unknown parts of oneself.

- Eric the Office Breaker - Team Size 2 - Designer & Programmer (2025.08)

A screen-click game for GMITK Game Jam 2025 - Loop. Using ironic gameplay where the player must break things while not being caught to convey a theme of embracing life.

- Simulator of the Meaning of Life - Solo - Designer & Developer (2024.02)

An interactive experience to ask 11 unavoidable questions in life to help answer "What is the meaning of life?". Hoping to hint player at the unlit path from answers by connecting their answers to philosophical references, because "What you are thinking may be answered thousands years ago".

- Earn the Name Back For Shadow Puppets - Team Leader (5 people) - Designer & Programmer (2022.06 - 2022.07)

A 2D Metroidvania-like action-adventure game, combining a unique shadow-play aesthetic with a hidden story.

- Yin Yang Messenger - Solo - Designer & Programmer (2022.02)

A 2D puzzle-platformer, featuring a core mechanic of switching between "Yin" and "Yang" states to interact with different creatures and spirits to solve challenges and deliver the message to the dead.

Paper Designs - Designer

Pull the Trigger (2024.01) | Passwords (2024.01) | Maze of Yin & Yang (2023.11) | Bomb Puzzle For MacGyver (2023.11) | Tear-down Collections (2023.10) | Rescue Child From The Spiritual House (2023.09) | Conquer the Ten Islands (2023.09) | Path of Generation & Annihilation (2023.08)