

Micah Ballard

Game Designer Composer

Curriculum Vitae

micah.i.ballard@gmail.com

[Portfolio Site](#)

[Itch.io](#)

[Soundcloud](#)

EDUCATION

2021 – 2025 Miami University - Bachelor of Music Composition, Bachelor of Games + Simulation

Has currently taken 193 credit hours with a 3.9 GPA, double majoring in Music Composition and Game Design.

2015 – 2021 Walnut Hills High School

4.86 GPA. Has taken 13 AP Classes: APUSH, Latin, US Government, Computer Science A, Calculus BC, English language and composition, Physics 1, Physics 2, English literature, Micro and Macroeconomics, Music Theory, and Psychology.

PRIVATE INSTRUCTION

2021 Studied with CCM Professor Ellen R. Harrison

Studying under Prof. Harrison, I learned how to further hone the skills taught to me by the Interlochen Online Composition program by composing a 9-minute string quartet for the Artswave Truth and Reconciliation project for Black and Brown Artists.

2020 – 2021 Interlochen Composition Program

The Interlochen composition program allowed me to study many aspects of music composition and theory that dramatically improved my understanding of music. I received a scholarship to attend the Interlochen program from the CSYO Nouveau program, and I am very thankful for them allowing me to experience the program. In the composition program, we were assigned to do a composition a week for 3 weeks for piano, clarinet and flute duet, and string quartet. Every day we would take five 70-minute classes, each studying different aspects of music such as theory, orchestration, computer music, score preparation, and musician artistry. We also got to meet many musicians and composers such as Ray Chen, Jennifer Higdon, and Wynton Marsalis who discussed topics such as drawing up compositional ideas, performance anxiety, technique, and who they learned from.

2020 Project 440

Project 440 is an organization that helps students, particularly musician students, on becoming entrepreneurs and tips on applying to college. The program allowed me to get a better grasp on the college system, scholarships, and application process for colleges. We also got to meet entrepreneurs and social media influencers like Drew Forde (That Viola Kid), Mike O'Bryan, and Hilary Hahn!

2019 – 2021 Studied with CSO Principal Bassoonist Christopher Sales

Studying under Christopher Sales, I was able to improve my skills both as a bassoonist, a musician, and a composer. Through his teachings and experience at CSYO and CSO performances, I was able to audition and be accepted into Miami University with a scholarship for Music Composition.

2021 – 2025 Miami University Private Instruction

At Miami University, I studied under the tutelage of Dr. Aaron Pergram for bassoon and Dr. Per Bloland, Dr. Phillip Roberts, and Dr. Susanna Hancock for composition. I also worked with Dr. Eric Sheffield and Dr. Tim DeMarks for the Undergraduate Summer Scholars Program for Game Development research (see (work experience), as well as working with Dr. Eric Hodgson for my Honors Capstone revolving around Dynamic Music in Game Design.

Awards / Honors

2022 - 2025	Awarded: Harry & Lucy Williams Memorial Scholarship
2021 - 2025	Awarded: Cincinnati Scholarship Foundation Partnership
2021 - 2025	Awarded: Miami University Music Scholarship
2021 - 2025	Awarded: RedHawk Excellence Scholarship
2021 - 2022	Awarded: Creative Arts Dean's Scholarship
2021	Awarded: Kroger Cincinnati/Dayton Scholarship
2021	Awarded: Alexander & Helen Griffin Memorial Scholarship
2021	Awarded: Kuhn & Waitz Scholarship
2021	Awarded: Laura Kruze Scholarship
2021	Awarded: Walnut Hills John Philip Sousa Award

Work Experience

2024 Miami University Tutor

I've tutored students for one year at Miami University, and am College Reading and Learning Association Level I Certified. Throughout this tutoring experience, I have gained vast improvements in my leadership and mentorship abilities, as well as being more sociable and familiar with interacting with people from various diverse backgrounds and teaching my clients problem-solving skills. I tutored students both in person and online, allowing me to be more available for my clients and their needs.

2023-2024 Miami University Teaching Assistant

I've been working with Mr. Christopher DeWitt as a Teaching Assistant for two years at Miami University. During this job, I've greatly improved my abilities with Unity and how to convey information about Unity to others as a leadership role, helping to fix bugs that the students encounter and teaching them workflows that allow them to debug these issues and avoid running into the same mistakes. I've also learned how to diagnose errors in code faster, and efficiently research solutions when I don't know the answer.

2023-Present Miami University Game Design Club

I am currently the lead Music Director and Programmer of the Game Design Club, developing music or code for a multitude of game projects released on Steam and Itch.io.

2023 Undergraduate Summer Scholars Program

I received a research grant to independently research first-person movement mechanics, level design, net code, and 3D modeling, working in Maya for character rigging, animation, composing music, and studying other FPS games over the summer for my game, Instruments of War.

Performance Experience

Orchestra

2019 – 2021 Cincinnati Symphony Youth Philharmonic Orchestra

I auditioned as a bassoonist for the CSYO in July 2019. I ended up joining their Concert Orchestra. I had also been accepted into a side program of the CSYO called Nouveau, which gave us free tickets to all CSO concerts in order for us to pick and study them. Sadly in early 2020, due to COVID-19, the last few concerts were canceled. We continue to do CSYO online, however, where I was accepted into the Philharmonic Orchestra, the top orchestra of the CSYO.

Wind Ensemble

2021-Present Miami University Wind Ensemble

I have been playing Bassoon for the Miami University Wind Ensemble for the past 3 years.

2022 Miami University Symphony Band

I played Bassoon for the Miami University Symphony Band in 2022.

2017 – 2021 Walnut Hills Wind Ensemble

I played in the Walnut Hills Wind Ensemble as 1st and 2nd Bassoon for 4 years.

Chamber

2021 – 2024 Miami University Bassoon Halloween Concert

I performed for the Miami University Bassoon Halloween Concerts annually, and Co-Directed and arranged video game music one year for my bassoon professor Dr. Aaron Pergram's Halloween Concert titled "Level Up".

Other

2022, 2024 Miami University Laptop Ensemble

I performed for the Miami University Laptop Ensemble in 2022 and 2024, which involved creating and/or performing electronic experimental music to be played by either laptops or other electronics.

Marching Band

2017 – 2019 Walnut Hills Marching Band

I led a new section of the Marching Band, named the Visual Ensemble. We handled the props and equipment on the field, such as stages and color guard props, and sometimes had to make quick on-the-fly decisions for issues the band faced, like microphones not working. I particularly handled the live mixing of the music, that being setting up the cords and muting or modifying the gain of mics. I learned a lot about working not only with a team, but working between other teams and groups within the band, acting as a mediator.

Compositions

TITLE (YEAR) DURATION	PERFORMER(S) / DESCRIPTION
<i>Password</i> (2024) 5'	A piece for Bb Clarinet, Violin, Cello, Piano, and Electronics, performed by Unheard Of
Miami University Game Design Club (MGDC) Bell Bot - Original Soundtrack (2024) 4'30"	Composed for a 3D open-world game called Bell Bot
(MGDC) Locked In Simulator - Original Soundtrack (2024) 4'	Composed two tracks for a 2D Job search simulator I worked on called Locked In Simulator
<i>Skylight</i> (2024) 7'	A piece for Soprano, Baritone, Bass Clarinet, Hi-Hat, and Vibraphone, performed by Guerilla Opera
<i>The Ship of Theseus</i> (2024) 4'30"	A piece for Full Orchestra
(MGDC) REDHAWK Simulator - <i>Desert</i> (2024) 1'28"	Composed for a 4 Level flying simulator game I helped program called REDHAWK Simulator
Frogology - <i>Sierra Nevada</i> (2024) 2'20"	Composed for an open-world exploration game I helped program called Frogology
Frogology - <i>Sierra Nevada (String Arrangement)</i> (2024) 2'	Composed for a game I worked on called Frogology
Feast or Famine - Original Soundtrack (2024) 3'	Composed for a 2D Tower Defense Side scroller game I helped program called Feast or Famine
Rhythm of Harmony - Original Soundtrack (2024) 2'	Composed for a Music-based Metroidvania game I programmed called Rhythm of Harmony
Sky Fishing - <i>Boundless Adventure</i> (2024) 1'31"	Composed for a 3D flying sim game I created called Sky Fishing
(MGDC) Kitsune Library - <i>Locked In</i> (2023) 1'23"	Composed for a point-and-click game called Kitsune Library
(MGDC) Rhythm Game - <i>Zealous Competition</i> (2023) 1'03"	Composed for a guitar hero style game called Rhythm Game
(MGDC) Miami Balancing - <i>Factory Punk</i> (2023) 1'42"	Composed for a block-stacking game called Miami Balancing

(MGDC) - <i>We'll Think About That</i> (2023) 1'04"	Composed for a Miami University Game Design Club game
(MGDC) Clown Punching - <i>Clowns' Folly</i> (2023) 2'10"	Composed for an FPS game called Clown Punching
(MGDC) Jungle Tanks! - Original Soundtrack (2023) 5'	Composed five tracks for a Wii Tanks style game called Jungle Tanks!
(MGDC) Astra Eternum - Original Soundtrack (2023) 6'	Composed three tracks for a Side-scrolling space game called Astra Eternum
Bassoon Halloween Concert "Level Up!" <i>Indie Showcase</i> (2023) 4'35"	An arrangement of music from Indie Games for Bassoon Quintet
Bassoon Halloween Concert "Level Up!" <i>RPGS - Journey of Heroes</i> (2023) 7'30"	An arrangement of music from RPGS for Bassoon Quintet and Piano
<i>Song</i> (2023) 2'	Composed for SATB and Piano.
<i>Hollow Knight - Into the Greenpath</i> (2022) 4'30"	An arrangement of some themes from Hollow Knight for Bassoon Quintet
<i>Stardew Valley Overture - Arrangement</i> (2022) 1'05"	An arrangement of the Stardew Valley Overture theme for Woodwind Sextet
<i>Journeys</i> (2022) 9'02"	A piece for Bassoon, Violin, and Piano
<i>Attuned</i> (2022) 4'45"	A piece for Woodwind Quintet
<i>Uncharted Depths</i> (2021) 4'55"	A piece for Percussion Ensemble
<i>Reminiscing Regrets</i> (2021) 3'36"	A piece for String Quartet
<i>Let America Be America Again</i> (2021) 6'	Performed by the Queen City String Quartet at Memorial Hall

Game Projects

2024 Rhythm of Harmony

A 2D metroidvania platformer utilizing rhythmic-based instrumental abilities to navigate and restore a hallowed world. After a great war in Rome that has corrupted the world, you play as a former Warrior who drops their weapon in pursuit of healing the world through ancient musical instrumental artifacts. This game was developed with the [P1] Games Program, where among 20 other games my new team of 12 was one of the top 5 games and currently represents the [P1] Organization on their website.

Accomplishments:

- Created a game in a month-long timespan

- coded a dynamic camera system, character movement/mechanics, level building, cutscene integration, UI
- Worked with a diverse team from across the world, ranging from the US, Canada, India, and more.
- Composed music and helped integrate sound effects.
- Helped facilitate daily team meetings and maintained strong communication with members.
- Edited gameplay trailer

Software used: Unity, C#, Muscore 4, Audacity, Wondershare Filmora, Trello, Miro

2024 Feast or Famine

Feast or Famine is a 2D game that fuses the Tower Defense genre with the side-scrolling platformer genre. The goal of the game is to gather resources by playing through side-scrolling levels, and to then use those resources to build defenses to guard your resource pile from enemies until you lose. This game was developed with the [P1] Games Program, and among over 20 other games my team and I tied for 1st place.

Accomplishments:

- Created a game in a month-long timespan that tied for 1st place for [P1] Games
- coded the side-scrolling character movement/mechanics, side-scrolling level building, UI, bug fixing
- Worked alongside other programmers to divide up tasks.
- Composed music and helped integrate sound effects.
- Helped facilitate daily team meetings and maintained strong communication with members.
- Edited gameplay trailer

Software used: Unity, C#, Muscore 4, Audacity, Wondershare Filmora, ClickUp, Miro

2024 Frogology

Frogology is an open-world quest game in which players participate as a conservationist for frogs in the Sierra Nevada mountains of southern California. Throughout the game, players go on quests to locate frogs and remove threats as their populations teeter on extinction. From the first-person perspective of the game and the scientific research Frogology allows the player to change the story of the frogs in the region and change the story by making players more aware of the many species of amphibians on the chopping block of extinction due to climate change.

This game was created during the 2024 IndieCade Climate Jam.

Accomplishments:

- Created a game in a month-long timespan
- coded the first-person character movement/mechanics, UI programming, bug fixing
- Worked alongside other programmers to divide up tasks.
- Composed music and integrated sound effects.
- Helped facilitate daily team meetings and maintained strong communication with members.

- Edited gameplay trailer

Software used: Unity, C#, Muscore 4, Audacity, Wondershare Filmora, Miro

2023 - 2024 To Aeris

To Aeris is a puzzle platformer game focused on exploration and atmospheric ambiance. You play as a newly hatched alien bird exploring the alien planet of Atlas, interacting with the environment of the world as they travel through the land and grow in order to complete the birds' migration cycle by returning to their home planet, Aeris. This game is currently in development

Accomplishments:

- I am leading a team of 5, being Stella Kinoshita, Greyton Manne, Gus Kirkpatrick, Lilith Wolfe, and Addie Drake.
- coding fluid movement systems, environmental interactions
- Composing dynamic multilayered orchestral music that changes based on interactions in the gameplay.

Software used: Unity, C#, Muscore 4, Audacity, Trello

2024 Sky Fishing

In Sky Fishing, you play as a bird soaring around for flying fish! The gameplay is controlled with the mouse. Move the mouse up to fly up, and down to fly down. Move the mouse left and right to strafe in those directions. Earn points and speed by catching fish, but don't fall into the water!

Accomplishments:

- Created a game in a short span of time for a Game Jam, ranking 49th out of 94 games for the June 2024 Minigame a Month
- coded a dynamic flight system, Menu UI, and GUI
- 3D modeled assets in blender
- Composed music and integrated sound effects
- Edited gameplay trailer

Software used: Unity, C#, Blender, Muscore 4, Audacity, Wondershare Filmora

2024 REDHAWK Simulator

I worked with the Miami University Game Design Club as the Lead Programmer to create a flying Simulator game in which you fly through 4 different levels, each with different background tracks and obstacles.

Accomplishments:

- Directed a team of over 15 people across a month-long timespan to finish and release a game on Steam
- coded a dynamic flight system, Menu UI, and GUI
- Assisted in 3D modeling assets in blender
- Composed music and integrated sound effects
- Edited gameplay trailer

Software used: Unity, C#, Blender, Muscore 4, Audacity, Wondershare Filmora

2024 LockedIn Simulator

I worked with the Miami University Game Design Club as the Main Menu Programmer and Sound Designer for a satirical job search simulator game where you make various decisions on which people and businesses to network with, which can affect your possible future job opportunities and stress levels.

Accomplishments:

- Worked alongside a team of over 15 people across a month-long timespan to finish and release a game on Steam
- coded a Modular Main Menu system
- Composed music and integrated sound effects
- Edited gameplay trailer

Software used: Unity, C#, Muscore 4, Audacity, Wondershare Filmora

2023 - 2024 Instruments of War

Compose yourself, and your surroundings! In a world where instruments are weapons, you take the role of a frog-like creature that engages in competitive 1v1s to test various weapons manufactured by the Sky Conservatory, a cloud-based laboratory that researches and manufactures weaponry. Utilize movement mechanics such as wallrunning, sliding, dashing, and more to dominate your opponent! Customize your arsenal and music-based attire to your liking.

Accomplishments:

- coded engaging movement FPS Mechanics, dynamic weapons, Character customization, and online integration for 1v1 combat
- 3D-modeled and rigged characters, maps, and weapons.
- Composed multilayered music tracks.

Software used: Unity, C#, Maya, Blender, Muscore 4, Audacity, Togg Track, Wondershare Filmora

2023 Miami University Game Design Club Game Collection

Assisted in music, sound design, and programming to help create a collection of Minigames for the 2023 Miami University Game Design Club Game Collection, which was released on Steam and Itch.io.

Accomplishments:

- Worked alongside a team of over 15 people across a month-long timespan to finish and release a game on Steam*
- Composed music and integrated sound effects*

Software used: Unity, C#, Muscore 4, Audacity, Wondershare Filmora

Memberships / Affiliations

ASCAP (Composer and Publisher)

References

Dr. Aaron Pergram	Assistant Professor of Bassoon, Miami University Associate Chair, Miami University pergraal@miamioh.edu
Dr. Phillip Roberts	Visiting Assistant Professor of Composition, Miami University robertp2@miamioh.edu
Dr. Per Bloland	Associate Professor of Composition and Technology, Miami University Coordinator of Composition, Miami University blolanpa@miamioh.edu
Dr. Susanna Hancock	Visiting Faculty of Music Composition, Miami University hancocsc@miamioh.edu