

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
- Studied under the tutelage of Dr. Aaron Pergram for bassoon and Dr. Per Bloland, Dr. Phillip Roberts, and Dr. Susanna Hancock for composition
- Worked with Dr. Eric Sheffield and Dr. Tim DeMarks for the Undergraduate Summer Scholars Program for Game Development research (see (work experience)
- Working with Dr. Eric Hodgson for my Honors Capstone revolving around Dynamic Music in Game Design

2015 – 2021 Walnut Hills High School

- Graduated with a 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

- learned how to further hone the skills taught to me by the Interlochen Online Composition program
- I was commissioned to compose a 9-minute string quartet for the Artswave Truth and Reconciliation project for Black and Brown Artists

2019 – 2021 Studied with CSO Principal Bassoonist 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

Additional Education

2020 – 2021 Interlochen Composition Program

- Studied orchestration, computer music, score preparation, and musician artistry
- Received a scholarship to attend the Interlochen program from the CSYO Nouveau program
- Composed for piano, clarinet and flute duet, and string quartet in 3 weeks
- Had private lessons and masterclasses with Ray Chen, Jennifer Higdon, and Wynton Marsalis

2020 Project 440

- *Learned about entrepreneur skills for musicians and college application tips*
- *Gained a better grasp on the college system, scholarships, and application process for colleges*
- *Met entrepreneurs and social media influencers like Drew Forde (That Viola Kid), Mike O'Bryan, and Hilary Hahn*

Awards / Honors

2025	Awarded: President's List
2024	Awarded: College Reading and Learning Association Level I Certified
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
2021-2024	Awarded: Dean's List
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**2024-2025 Steam Playtester - Die in the Dungeon**

- *One of 30+ playtesters hired to test gameplay mechanics and report bugs for Die in the Dungeon to prepare it for its Steam release.*
- *Focused on discussing UI and UX design improvements as well as gameplay features.*

2024 Miami University Tutor

- *I have been tutoring students at Miami University in Unity, C# programming, and Maya 3D modeling*
- *College Reading and Learning Association Level I Certified*
- *Gained vast improvements in my leadership and mentorship abilities,*
- *Able to interact and mentor people from various diverse backgrounds*
- *Teach my clients problem-solving skills*
- *Tutor 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 Unity for two years at Miami University*
- *Improved my abilities with Unity and how to convey information about Unity to others in a leadership role*
- *helping to fix bugs that students encounter*
- *Teach students workflows that allow them to debug these issues and avoid running into the same mistakes*
- *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

- *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

- *Accepted as bassoonist for the CSYO in July 2019*
- *Accepted into a side program of the CSYO called Nouveau, where we could watch CSO concerts for us to pick and study and gain additional academic resources*
- *Accepted into the Philharmonic Orchestra, the top orchestra of the CSYO*

Wind Ensemble

2021-Present Miami University Wind Ensemble - Bassoon**2022 Miami University Symphony Band - Bassoon****2017 – 2021 Walnut Hills Wind Ensemble - 1st/2nd Bassoon**

Chamber

2021 – 2024 Miami University Bassoon Halloween Concert

- *Performed for the Miami University Bassoon Halloween Concerts annually*
- *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

- Created and performed electronic experimental music to be played by either laptops or other electronics

Marching Band

2017 – 2019 Walnut Hills Marching Band

- led a new section of the Marching Band, named the Visual Ensemble
- handled the props and equipment on the field, such as stages and color guard props
- Could make quick on-the-fly decisions for issues the band faced like microphones not working
- Handled the live mixing of the music
- Worked and communicated both with my team and between other teams in the band

Compositions

TITLE (YEAR) DURATION

PERFORMER(S) / DESCRIPTION

Large Ensemble

The Ship of Theseus
(2024) 4'30"

A piece for Full Orchestra

Miami University Game Design Club (MGDC)
Bell Bot - Original Soundtrack
(2024) 4'30"

Composed for a 3D open-world game called Bell Bot

Song
(2023) 2'

Composed for SATB and Piano.

Uncharted Depths
(2021) 4'55"

A piece for Percussion Ensemble

Chamber

Password
(2024) 5'

A piece for Bb Clarinet, Violin, Cello, Piano, and Electronics, performed by Unheard Of

Skylight
(2024) 7'

A piece for Soprano, Baritone, Bass Clarinet, Hi-Hat, and Vibraphone, performed by Guerilla Opera

Bassoon Halloween Concert "Level Up!"
Indie Showcase
(2023) 4'35"

An arrangement of music from Indie Games for Bassoon Quintet

Bassoon Halloween Concert "Level Up!"
RPGS - Journey of Heroes
(2023) 7'30"

An arrangement of music from RPGS for Bassoon Quintet and Piano

Hollow Knight - Into the Greenpath
(2022) 4'30"

An arrangement of some themes from Hollow Knight for Bassoon Quintet

Stardew Valley Overture - Arrangement
(2022) 1'05"

An arrangement of the Stardew Valley Overture theme for Woodwind Sextet

Journeys

A piece for Bassoon, Violin, and Piano

(2022) 9'02"

Attuned
(2022) 4'45"*Reminiscing Regrets*
(2021) 3'36"*Let America Be America Again*
(2021) 6'

A piece for Woodwind Quintet

A piece for String Quartet

Performed by the Queen City String Quartet at
Memorial Hall

Game Soundtracks

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(MGDC) REDHAWK Simulator - *Desert*
(2024) 1'28"Composed for a 4 Level flying simulator game I
helped program called REDHAWK SimulatorFrogology - Original Soundtrack
(2024) 5'Composed for an open-world exploration game I
helped program called FrogologyFeast or Famine - Original Soundtrack
(2024) 3'Composed for a 2D Tower Defense Side scroller
game I helped program called Feast or FamineRhythm of Harmony - Original Soundtrack
(2024) 2'Composed for a Music-based Metroidvania game I
programmed called Rhythm of HarmonySky Fishing - *Boundless Adventure*
(2024) 1'31"Composed for a 3D flying sim game I created called
Sky Fishing(MGDC) Kitsune Library - *Locked In*
(2023) 1'23"Composed for a point-and-click game called Kitsune
Library(MGDC) Rhythm Game - *Zealous Competition*
(2023) 1'03"Composed for a guitar hero style game called
Rhythm Game(MGDC) Miami Balancing - *Factory Punk*
(2023) 1'42"Composed for a block-stacking game called Miami
Balancing(MGDC) - *We'll Think About That*
(2023) 1'04"Composed for a Miami University Game Design Club
game(MGDC) Clown Punching - *Clowns' Folly*
(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

Game Projects

2024 Balance Breakers

A platform fighting game where you fight another player on a balancing platform while jumping on pogo sticks fused with weapons.

Accomplishments:

- *Worked as a two-person team as the programmer and sound designer with my teammate as the Artist and composer*
- *Created a game over the span of a week and marketed it's release across platforms like LinkedIn, Bluesky, Twitter, and Reddit*
- *coded unique pogo player movement, tilting platform physics, dynamic ui, character selection, and animation integration.*
- *Encouraged bouncing off ideas between my teammate and I across in-person meetings, messages, and playtests with other people*
- *Edited gameplay trailer*

Software used: Unity, C#, Wondershare Filmora

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

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
- Released 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

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

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, Toggl 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

Software Proficiencies

GAME DEVELOPMENT	Unity Game Maker Studio Unreal Engine Wwise
PROGRAMMING	C# Java HTML, CSS, Javascript C++ Blueprints JSON
NOTATION	Musescore 4
DAW	Ableton Audacity
3D MODELING	Maya Blender
PROJECT MANAGEMENT	Trello Toggl ClickUp
GRAPHIC / ARTISTIC	Adobe Creative Suite PhotoShop, Illustrator
VIDEO	Wondershare Filmora
TEXT / PRESENTATION	Google Drive Suite Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms, Drawings

Instrumental Proficiencies

Woodwinds	Bassoon, Oboe, Bass Clarinet, Bb Clarinet, Alto Saxophone
Other	Piano, Chromatic Harmonica, Ocarina

Additional Skills

TEAM MANAGEMENT	Tutoring, Teaching Assisting, Game Jam Leader, Social Media Communication
VIDEO	Videogame Trailers, Video Editing

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
Susanna Hancock	Visiting Faculty of Music Composition, Miami University hancocsc@miamioh.edu
Dr. Eric Hodgson	Associate Professor and Director - Emerging Technology in Business and Design hodgsoep@miamioh.edu