Sam J Spawton

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Personal Summary

I am currently a Mid-level Gameplay and AI Programmer for Third Kind Games after graduating Sheffield Hallam University in 2021 with 2-1 Degree in Computer Science for Games. Since getting my first computer at 7 my interest in the field has grown exponentially, this passion led me into my degree where I specialised in Artificial Intelligence modules in hopes my future career will lead me into that field. Outside of education and work I am an avid skier, cyclist, hiker, and camper to try to give my body the break it desperately needs from all these screens. I thrive in a situation where I can learn from helping others and I desperately enjoy a challenging environment that pushes my problem solving and academic skills to their limits.

Technical Skills

I have been programming in C++ in a professional capacity for over 5 years working both on custom engines I have helped build using DirectX11 and DirectX12, but mostly with my experience lying in UE4 and UE5 – both of which I have significant experience with on professional projects that have been released and on a yet to be released AAA project of which I have become an AI specialist on. I also have considerable experience in Unity due to university and some professional projects and can confidently work in C#. Outside of this I worked as a software development contractor on Project Zomboid for The Indie Stone working in both Java and Lua for several years. I have strong 3D mathematics skills from continuous studying from early college, throughout university and through experience on professional projects but my main experience lies within Artificial Intelligence within Games.

Education

Sheffield Hallam University (2018 - 2022)	
BSc Computer Science for Games with Placement Year	
Final Year Modules	Project (Dissertation) – **(2:1 62%)** Advanced Games Console Projects – **(2:1 61%)** Artificial Intelligence In Games – **(2:2 56%)**
Second Year Modules	Professional Development Project – **(First 85%)** Software-Hardware Optimisation – **(2:1 64%)** Web Application Development – **(2:1 64%)** Programming for Games – **(Pass 48%)** Object-Oriented Programming for Games – **(Pass 48%)** Mathematics for Modelling and Rendering – **(2:2 55%)**
First Year Modules	Introduction to Games Development - **(2:1 61%)** Mathematics for Graphics - **(First 86%)** Fundamentals of Computer Architecture - **(Pass 46%)** Fundamentals of Programming - **(2:1 65%)** Systems Modelling - **(2:1 67%)** Professionalism and Project Development - **(First 75%)**

Formby High School Sixth Form (2016 - 2018)
AS level Further Mathematics A level Computer Science Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) in Artificial Intelligence AS level Mathematics A level Mathematics A level Physics
Formby High School Sixth Form (2012 - 2016)
GCSEs in: Maths - **A**, Computer Science – **A**, English Language - **A**, English Literature - **A**, Chemistry - **A**, Physics - **A**, Biology - **A**, Art - **B**, History - **B**

Employment

Third Kind Games (Current) – Mid Gameplay/ AI Programmer: At TKG I have worked on numerous internal projects implementing new AI functionality while communicating and integrating external AI navigation plugins to a UE5 project, been a crucial part of an AI R&D team exploring machine learning and most recently working on Sea of Thieves for Microsoft as an engine programmer.

Bulkhead Interactive (2 years) – Junior/Mid Programmer: At Bulkhead I had the role of a Gameplay and AI Programmer and was working on multiple exciting projects including our publicly released prototypes Promod and Killrun, I significantly developed my UE4 skills from this and my UE5 skills on Wardogs over several months, working on multiplayer FPS games has given me a huge understanding of the underlying networking and game architecture for a large scale game which is invaluable to me for my own exciting projects. Most recently I had been working on an Transformers Reactivate with Splash Damage working as an AI programmer.

Revolting Creations Team - Tanglewood Games (Freelance Programmer – 2 years): Working on quality of life changes and bug fixes for our current project – Project Zomboid made by The Indie Stone (TIS). Here I program in Java and Lua and work with their team and ours to resolve the smaller issues that have built up over development. This requires lots of communication with TIS, Git / Version control and constant communication for testing and fixing.

IT-Developers (IT Technician – 1 year): A list of my responsibilities and skills: daily server checks and backups, systems maintenance, user support, data processing and organising, software testing and reporting, systems diagnostics and repairs, personal data handling, working to time constraints, administration skills, problem solving, customer service and being strictly GDPR conscious.

Praxis CIC (Data Analyst/ IT Technician – 1 year): Here I did work experience for several weeks in my last year of high school and second year of college, following the work experience I was invited to be a part time consultant for technical issues as well as helping with office tasks, data processing and analysis for several large research projects, transcriptions of interviews and lastly I was involved in meetings with the Liverpool board of education to discuss and analyse bullying across the Merseyside county in primary and secondary schools.

Lucid Games (Quality Assurance): For several weeks I did work experience here as part of the Quality Assurance (QA) team and worked with several colleagues testing the Goat Simulator game and their in-house game (Switchblade). This taught me some valuable technical skills in the game development industry; including industry standards required to publish and release a game. Most of my time was spent analysing game mechanics and reporting any blemishes throughout the software that I found via multiple methods of testing.

Additional Experience

In my free time I also worked as a committee member for the Game Development Society we created. This is my way of sharing my passion for games and game development. I also volunteered with the Scouting Organisation weekly for Cubs, Beavers, and Scouts. This was an amazing experience and being able to give back to the community by helping at an organisation that shaped me into the person I am today. I take part in the GGJ (global game jam) most years with teams of industry professionals for self development and fun, I attend tech and game conferences when I get the time and enjoy working on personal projects to teach myself new techniques I can't experiment with at work.

Interests

While everything written above sounds like I am just a computer nerd who is always stuck inside I do enjoy lots of outdoor activities. I have been skiing since a very young age and try to keep up with it as much as I can do, I also frequently visit the Lake District and Peak District for camping, Hiking and Mountain Biking. I play my fair share of games as I would imagine most game programmers do and have gotten into modding recently which is really fun and is a great way to escape from the world for a little bit. I have been gaming since my first console back when I was 9 or 10 and my passion for games has led me down this path. Outside of my education and my other hobbies I enjoy building and repairing computers as well as research into AI technology and systems which I have studied outside of Education for close to 6 years now, completing an EPQ in it for college as well as using it as the main focus of my Dissertation.

References

Chris Wood	Ian Truman	Mark Featherstone
Director at Tanglewood Games	Director at IT Developers	Course Leader at SHU
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