



Tim Burrell-Saward

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Personal Statement

I am an award-winning creative leader, designer and technologist. With over a decade of experience in new product development of mixed reality consumer electronics and interactive environments for the entertainment industries, I take play seriously.

I work with cross-disciplinary and globally distributed teams to create products combining industrial design, mechatronics, software development and game design, at both small scale and mass manufacture. I have experience in start-up culture from inception to exit, and understand how to build solid business strategies around cutting-edge tech stacks.

I currently work under the studio name Mother Ultimate Ltd.

Experience

2019-2022 : Project Lead & Hardware Designer - Return to Dark Tower

[Return to Dark Tower](#) is an award winning mechatronic app-connected game that raised \$5m on Kickstarter and shipped tens of thousands of units globally. It was made in partnership with Restoration Games.

My role included:

- Leading design on physical tower and packaging from first concepts through DFM, mass manufacture, certification and post release support.
- Project management of international physical and digital design teams through a combination of Agile and Waterfall methodologies.
- Engagement & management of a complex East Asian mass-manufacture pipeline (inc plastics, electronics, printing, assembly, certification, QA & global shipping).
- Document controller for mission-critical infrastructure including BOMs, budgets, design docs and timelines.
- Leading dev, UI & UX teams to ensure best practices in building robust digital-physical connected play experiences.

2021-2022 : Lead Game Designer / Wonderlab AR - Preloaded

Leading game design on a [geospatial AR game](#) in partnership with the Science Museum London, designed to bring the museum's collection out into the world.

- Development of a cutting-edge AR game design including defining key experience pillars, gameplay loops, retention mechanics, wireframes, user stories, first time user experiences, personas, concept decks and game design docs.
- Working with Niantic's LightshipAR platform, including with features not yet in public release.
- Creation of a complex mapping dataset derived from OpenStreetMap.

2020 : Project Lead / Grassroots PPE

At the beginning of the COVID19 pandemic I helped launch a volunteer [grassroots project](#) to tackle the shortage of emergency PPE for front-line workers, involving the creation of a 3D printer farm that went on to ship over 100,000 custom designed faceshields.

- Quickly and efficiently assembling and facilitating a team of volunteers to examine the problem space, figure out the strengths of the team and identify clear goals.
- Securing funding and sponsorship to purchase 100+ 3D printers and associated consumables.
- Supporting a design team that went on to create a bespoke faceshield design that received CE and BSI certification.

2019 : Creative Technical Lead - Punchdrunk

R&D lead for the UKRI funded "[Audience of the Future](#)" project in association with the Royal Shakespeare Company, focussing on the new opportunities that are afforded when wireless technologies meet immersive theater.

- Assembling a team of theater practitioners, writers and technologists, then helping them find a shared vocabulary through workshops.
- Exploring technologies including RFID, Wifi-RTT, IM, UWB and MQTT, then building prototype experiences around them.
- Testing those prototypes in live audience performances and then presenting findings back to key stakeholders in easily actionable formats.

2015-2019 : Founding Member, Lead Designer & Product Owner - Sensible Object

Leading concept development, prototyping (in hardware and software), industrial design, game design, packaging and interaction design across multiple mass-produced connected game products including:

- [Beasts of Balance](#), the first tabletop game sold in Apple stores globally.
- [When In Rome](#), the world's first Alexa enabled boardgame.
- A number of NDA'd R&D projects for external clients.

I helped the studio to:

- Grow from five to 25 people.
- Release three critically-acclaimed games fusing hardware, firmware, electronics and mobile apps.
- Manufacture and ship tens of thousands of units globally.
- Complete two successful Kickstarter campaigns.
- Complete a successful exit to Niantic Inc.

My responsibilities included:

- Ensuring the studio's creative philosophies and business goals were fully embodied in its products.
- Shaping a suite of democratic, inclusive creative processes with a focus on empowering individuals and creating safe working spaces.
- Implementing a successful R&D program (working with AR, computer vision & conversational AI),
- Creating a robust manufacturing pipeline spanning large scale hardware and electronics development as well as certification and logistics.

- Recruiting and mentoring high performance design and production teams in the UK, US and China.
- Establishing robust and safe methods of conducting user research and playtesting sessions with young people.

As Product Owner for the flagship title Beasts of Balance, I was responsible for:

- The day-to-day performance of a live title, helping the property grow from a single release to over 20 SKUs.
- Managing the digital and physical development processes (inc. owning the backlog).
- Developing KPIs alongside the C-Suite, and guiding the team to deliver against them.
- Using trend analysis and competitor research to drive ongoing product development.

Sensible Object was [acquired by Niantic](#) in 2019.

2010-2015 : Founder & Industrial Designer - East London Kinetics (ELK)

[ELK](#) was a two person tech-art practice founded to create digital/physical interactive public artworks for brands, agencies and as private commissions. Typically consisting of physical installations with embedded electronics and custom software layers. ELK projects had a strong tendency towards magic and play. Projects included:

- physical visualizations of NASA deep space data for the Tate Britain and Selfridges London.
- data visualization sculpture for Wikipedia's 10th anniversary.
- a giant talking throne for Kensington Palace.

Education

BSc Product Design (hons), Brighton University, UK, 2005

Copenhagen Institute of Interaction Design (CIID), Denmark, 2010

JIRA and Confluence training, Udemy, 2019

Circular Economy: An Introduction, edX, 2022 (ongoing)

Key Skills

Concept ideation (Adobe Creative Suite, Miro, Figma, Keynote, Powerpoint), industrial design (Rhino3D, Solidworks, Fusion360, ZBrush, Keyshot), rapid prototyping (3d printing, CNC, Arduino, RPi), game design, user research, process design, project management (JIRA, Asana, HacknPlan), manufacturing & logistics chain management.

Awards

- BoardGameGeek Cooperative Game of the Year: Return to Dark Tower
- Toy of the Year Finalist: When in Rome
- National Parenting Product Award (NAPPA): Beasts of Balance Kids at Play
- Interactive (KAPI) Innovation Award: Beasts of Balance
- Toy of the Year Finalist: Beasts of Balance
- Parents' Choice Gold Award: Beasts of Balance
- Good Toy Guide Recommended Game: Beasts of Balance
- SXSW Gamer's Voice Award (nominated): Beasts of Balance
- Dice Tower Seal of Excellence: Beasts of Balance
- Shut Up & Sit Down Quinns' Corner Awards: Beasts of Balance
- XOXO Official Selection: Beasts of Balance
- Indiecade Winner of the Technology Award: Beasts of Balance
- The Oxford Samuel Beckett Theater Trust Award: The Body

Select Talks and Exhibitions

- GDC, Remote, 2021 ([watch here](#))

- Artful Spark, UK, 2018
- Gen Con, Indianapolis, Indiana, USA, 2018
- Indiecade Europe, Paris, France, 2018
- SXSW, Austin, Texas, USA, 2017
- Electromagnetic Field Festival, UK, 2017
- Internationale Spieltage SPIEL, Essen, Germany, 2016
- UK Games Expo, Birmingham, UK, 2016
- PAX East, Boston, Massachusetts, USA, 2016
- The Tate Britain, London, UK, 2016
- Gamecity, Nottingham, UK, 2016
- NN Contemporary Art, Northampton, UK, 2015
- Selfridges, London, UK, 2015
- EGX Rezzed, London, UK, 2015
- The Barbican, London, UK, 2015
- The Science Museum, London, UK, 2014
- Kensington Palace, London, UK, 2013
- London Design Festival, London, UK, 2012
- Designersblock, London, UK, 2012
- Wikipedia 10th Anniversary, London, UK, 2011

About Me

I'm a 41 year old British national who lives on the beautiful Kent coastline in the UK. I'm married to a wonderful scientist with whom I have a five year old daughter and one year old son. I love being on the sea and am a volunteer RNLI lifeboat crew member.

A portfolio of selected projects can be found [here](#).

Thanks for your consideration.