HANS WAKELIN

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QUALITY-DRIVEN GAME DESIGN + QA LEAD / TECHNICAL GENERALIST

I began my career in QA at Activision, writing bugs, building test plans and learning what actually breaks games. I was recognized early for writing clear, detailed reports and got pulled into an unofficial QA manager role to mentor others on how to find issues, describe them well, and test features with intent. I was eventually invited to join the Treyarch in-house QA group because they wanted my approach on their side of the wall.

After several years managing and coordinating QA across publishers and developers, I moved into game design. I took that same mindset with me. For more than 20 years I have continued to work directly with QA teams while also testing my own systems and content. I understand what QA needs from design, art and engineering, and I know how to protect their time. My background across disciplines helps me close loops faster, drive clarity, and build features with fewer surprises.

I've worked in AAA console action games, mobile F2P and cross-disciplinary teams in Japan and the US. I'm hands-on with tools, pipelines, scripting, and feature ownership, and I tend to bridge teams that don't always speak the same language.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Principal Level Designer - Peloton Interactive, New York, NY **DEC 2023 - JUN 2025**

- Helped lead world design for a large-scale connected experience and kept feature quality high by validating content early, surfacing risks and guiding cross-team fixes.
- As lead level designer, created clear pipelines so art, design and engineering could work in sync sans conflict.
- Managed all in-game audio assets resources, implementation pipeline, and functionality testing.
- Prototyped features myself so issues were ironed out before QA even touched them.

Senior Technical Game Designer - WayForward Technologies, Santa Clarita, CA **JUN 2021 - OCT 2023**

- Owned level and content delivery on multiple projects and verified feature behavior through hands-on test passes.
- Refactored pipelines that caused QA churn and cleaned up data flows so bugs were easier to catch and reproduce.
- Delivered late-cycle cinematics and tooling that didn't disrupt existing game systems or test plans.

Technical Game Designer / Level Designer / Translator - h.a.n.d., Inc., Sapporo, Japan **MAY 2013 - APR 2021**

- Lead level design on NEO: The World Ends With You and worked closely with QA, producers and publishers across multiple phases to coordinate which areas to test.
- Built and tested cameras, collision and flow.
- Prototyped VR and action systems solo and caught issues long before formal testing even started.
- Wrote internal documentation that helped new engineers and QA hit the ground running.

Senior Technical Game Designer / QA Lead - Treyarch / Activision Blizzard, Santa Monica, CA **APR 2000 - JUN 2009**

- Started in QA writing bugs and building test plans on Spider-Man titles.
- Recognized for quality and clarity and promoted to mentor other testers and guide how testing was done.
- Managed test coordination between publisher (Activision) and QA team
- Invited to join Treyarch in-house because I had a practical, collaborative way of uncovering problems.
- Later became a mission and systems designer on traversal-heavy content while still validating and reporting on game and tool behavior.

COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- Maintained an advanced UE4 engine fork with Toon Shader Models, Localized IBL, and DBuffer Multi Opacity features for 3 years (engine versions 4.21 to 4.27).
- Wrote public tutorials for VR Expansion Plugin and various internal Unreal workflows.

EDUCATION & TECHNICAL SKILLS

B.A., Linguistics - California State University, Northridge
Certificate in **Advanced Japanese** - International Language Institute, Sapporo
Certificate in **Google Project Management** - Google (Coursera)

Engines: Unity (Expert), Proprietary engines (Expert), Unreal Engine 4/5 (Advanced, and aiming to master)

Code: Blueprint, visual scripting, C (strong), C# (working), C++ (read/modify/debug)

Tools: Jira, Trello, Youtrack, Asana, Figma, Miro, Slack, Confluence, SVN, Perforce, Github, .NET, Ryder, Github Desktop, Visual Assist, Google Suite (Sheets, Slides, Docs), Microsoft 365 (Excel, PowerPoint, Word), Zoom, Meet,etc., Cosmos CSM

Art/Audio: Blender (model/rig/animate/UV), Affinity Suite, Audacity

Languages: English (native), Japanese (business/fluent)

Portfolio: https://hanswakelin.com