

## GAMES ART AND DESIGN



## Student profile

Rosie Ball, from Cambridge  
BA (Hons) Games Art and Design



## Now I like talking about the things I do

**Before I came to NUCA I didn't even like reading aloud in class. The course requires you to do lots of pitches and presentations and now I really enjoy getting up in front of people and even leading workshops. I've been encouraged to think about my profession.**

The course challenges you with projects, such as creating a 3D animated marine creature. I'd never modelled in 3D before but I did lots of observational drawings at an

aquarium and then modelled a fish in Maya, animated it in a loop, and added an environment in Adobe After Effects. I've participated in Fine Art exhibitions with pieces from my games and for my final project I'm working on a game app.

The Course Leader is very encouraging and finds the time to speak to all of us individually. I'm talking to her about careers in the games industry and finding a role that uses my skills in communication.

See a film about Rosie at: [www.nuca.ac.uk/itunes](http://www.nuca.ac.uk/itunes)

# Games Art and Design

## ABOUT THE COURSE

**The BA (Hons) Games Art and Design course focuses upon the three interacting areas of creative practice that constitute digital game production: art, design and technology. An innovative and responsive curriculum encourages creativity, giving you the skillset to succeed in a fast moving sector by maximising both employability and entrepreneurial spirit.**

The course develops your creativity through teaching conceptualisation and design, practical techniques for game artists and a strong critical understanding of game forms. We help you realise your full potential by encouraging exploration of both mainstream and indie games, the 'casual' sector, mobile technologies and cutting edge forms such as art, documentary and persuasive games.

You gain a strong understanding of traditional art and design techniques, learning how they inform digital practice as the course develops your technology-based skillset using industry standard 2D and 3D applications for game development. Taking advantage of our rare and prestigious Apple University Developer status you are encouraged to realise concepts for Apple's iOS devices or other game platforms including current generation consoles.

We combine professional practice with the opportunity for artistic and academic progression. Throughout our unique curriculum the course regularly collaborates with professionals from the games sector and other related creative industries. To enhance your educational experience there are a variety of opportunities for work placements and/or projects in collaboration with the commercial sector and other institutions. Professionals from the games sector also energise the curriculum through lectures, workshops, the setting of briefs and other forms of direct input.

## HOW THE COURSE IS TAUGHT

### Year One

You are introduced to the fundamental principles, techniques and theories that inform innovative games art and design. You learn the core principles of games and investigate the diversity of game cultures. In industry-style teams you conceptualise a game concept while learning about core mechanics. This is followed by the opportunity to create your first game design concept and document for an Apple iOS platform game. Workshops and show and tell taught sessions instruct in both traditional art and design skills plus the foundations of digital game art, including how to model, rig and animate assets.

### Year Two

You develop increased awareness of workflows and game development pipelines, exploring the professional processes of prototyping and testing. You engage in a 'Pitch Presentation' of your concept to staff and guests from the commercial sector. Increasing your critical awareness of both theory and professional practice, you conduct an industry case study that gives a depth of insight into the practices of the commercial sector.

Your software skills acquisition is supported by academic lectures, technical workshops and a wide range of online tutorials. You can demonstrate skills in prototype design work including a communicative design document, 2D and 3D assets, a digital portfolio and an animated showreel.

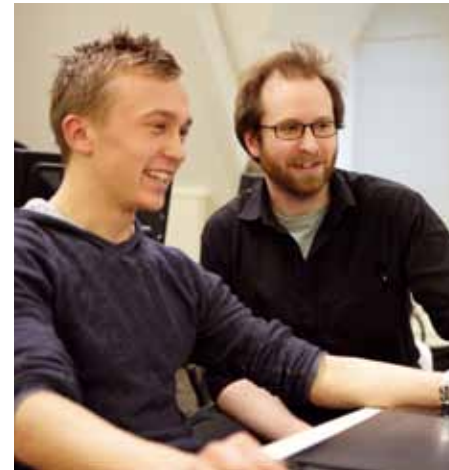
### Year Three

You combine professional skills in organisation, management and communication with your creative, technical and conceptual skills. You have the opportunity to work individually or in teams to create a realised game prototype, which may be a level in a games engine, a Flash game, a game concept or a prototype slice for an Apple iOS platform. In addition you produce a Research Report contextualising your practical studio work and demonstrating your engagement with sustained written content. You exit the course with a professional portfolio of concept art or game prototype(s) showcased on a personal website, demonstrating your work as a game artist or designer in a professional manner, presenting the full range of your creative skillset and descriptions of professional experiences gained from your learning experiences on the course.



*From top:*  
Students use Mudbox to model 3D heads in the NUCA Media Lab;  
Scenery by Zoltan Fejes.

*Opposite page clockwise from top:*  
A student creates digital character sketches; Staff demonstrate an iPad game; *Baby Bird* by Sam Gross;  
*Looking Over Yard* by Graham Jones;  
One to one tutorial.



## Games Art and Design

### RESOURCES

The Games Art and Design course is based in the new renovated Monastery Media Lab. Working alongside students from the Animation course and across the course years, you have access to state-of-the-art studio space, similar to that of a working industry studio. There has been a high level of investment into staff expertise and software. You will utilise digital workshops, sophisticated industry-standard software programmes such as Maya and Adobe Creative Suite.

### YOUR FUTURE

Representatives from Apple, Codemasters, EA, Sony Computer Entertainment, Ninja Theory, KUJO Studios and TIGA have given advice that informed the curriculum. The course attracts high profile speakers and guest lecturers such as game design guru Chris Crawford, Mitch Phillips (Art Director at Ninja Theory), Joshua and Maxwell Scott-Slade (Founders of award-winning indie studio JohnnyTwoShoes) and Paul Gravett (comic scholar and curator). Collaborative project partners include Tate Britain, The Castle Museum Norwich and Real Projects.

NUCA has been awarded Apple iOS University Developer Status giving access to the Software Developer kit and the wide

range of resources in the Development Centre, which fully equips you to create games and applications.

The course is affiliated to professional associations such as the Digital Games Research Association, TIGA - the UK games trade association, the International Games Development Association and Women in Games International.

Students have found employment in companies such as Electronic Arts, Blitz, Jagex, Frontier and Climax and on SFX for films such as Harry Potter and Prince of Persia.

Students who successfully complete their undergraduate studies are also able to progress to a range of MA courses at NUCA, in particular MA Moving Image and Sound.

### COURSE INFORMATION

This course is available at BA (Hons) Degree.  
 UCAS Code: N39  
 Course Code: WG24  
 Contact: [gad@nuca.ac.uk](mailto:gad@nuca.ac.uk)  
**For further information visit:**  
[www.nuca.ac.uk/bagamesartanddesign](http://www.nuca.ac.uk/bagamesartanddesign)

## Alumnus profile

**Joe Lloyd Pack, Visual Effects  
 Coordinator at Double Negative in London  
 Graduating Year: 2007**



## I enjoy a new challenge every day

**After graduation I did freelance work on movie sets, such as *Prince of Persia* and *The Wolfman*. Having met people at Double Negative, I applied for a position as a runner. I've since worked my way up to be a coordinator on a really exciting feature the company's working on.**

I am responsible for a team of VFX artists working to deadlines from briefs outlined by the client and show producers. My team feeds the animators with scenes that have the 'tracked camera' and any digital characters/props/environments

required for them to begin 'animation blocking'. It's beneficial to know the creative and technical sides of visual effects in my role.

My study really helped my understanding of the working pipeline and I am able to see the reasons for doing something from an artistic point of view. As a student at NUCA you're encouraged to work with the people around you and I have found it easy to work as part of a team which, in my job, is really important.

View Joe's work at: [www.nuca.ac.uk/alumni](http://www.nuca.ac.uk/alumni)