

# Bjarke Alexander Larsen

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Game researcher, developer, and writer investigating how games tell stories with players.

See what I do at <http://www.bjarke.it/aboutme/>

## Working Experience

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- 2020-2025 Teaching Assistant (Part time) – *University of California, Santa Cruz*  
Part of PhD employment.  
Taught classes in game design, UX, and interactive storytelling.
- 2017-2019 Programmer, (Unity, C#) (Part time) - *Pointvoucher*  
Startup mobile game development of branded casual games for Android and iOS.
- Implemented gameplay and UI for 6 mobile games in collaboration with a multinational development, backend, and design team.
  - Maintained all live games with regular updates and fixes as needed from the support team and technical requirements.
- 2016 Assistant (Internship) - *Oubliette Entertainments Ltd.*
- Helped construct puzzles for **FRAMED**, a live-streamed Escape Room for Alibi, UKTV.
  - Helped on **RETHINKERS**, an ARG for recruitment for Dyson. Created a Twine-based puzzle.
  - Helped create an Escape-room-in-a-box experience, from concept to prototype.
- 2016 Intern, Writing – *Refactored Games*  
On the game “*Unclaimed World*”. Helped write story missions, barks and ambient dialogue.

## Projects

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- 2023-2025 Creative Director, Narrative Designer – *Telegrams from the Choir Train*  
An Experimental Narrative Discord Bot Game. Made as part of my PhD work.
- Assembled and worked with a team of 5, managed their progress and organized production.
  - Built a unique post-post-apocalyptic fantasy setting and implemented the narrative.
  - Implemented the bot in Python, maintained documentation, and organised playtests.
- 2021-2025 Researcher - *Destiny Narrative Project*  
PhD Research project into the relationship between live development and storytelling in Destiny 2.
- Conducted qualitative interviews, a survey, and a 2½-year online ethnography.
- 2021-2023 Narrative Designer – *LUX*  
Research project on using ARGs to study complex social phenomena in everyday situations.
- Wrote the narrative of the ARG and collaboratively designed puzzles for research needs.
  - Conducted countless playtests on multiple iterations of the game, interacting with and observing player behavior as a character within the game.
  - Analyzed, coded, and presented complex findings on player’s behavior.
- 2019 Technical Director - *Flux*  
An interactive documentary museum exhibition, about our relationship to gender and how it changes.
- Implemented technical prototypes and explored technical solutions.
- 2018 Writer – *The Silence and the Noise*  
Advent Calendar story with an entry for each day December 1-25<sup>th</sup>.
- 2015-2016 Narrative Designer, Programmer – *THINQ*  
Multi-semester game & research project in collaboration with 6-8 other students.
- Designed the narrative and levels to meet a variety of external and internal requirements.
  - Designed, conducted, and analyzed several playtests and studies with mixed-methods data, including telemetry, observation, and post-play interviews.
- 2015 Creator - *Eravola*  
Interactive fiction game. Awarded a “Runner-up” position in the WAG (Write-a-game)-challenge.
- Solo project. Written, designed and programmed by myself.

- 2015 Designer, Writer – *Terra Nostra*  
 Student game production with 30 students making a 2.5D platformer game about climate change.
- Designed levels, interactions and meta-progression throughout the game.
  - Wrote the narrative, and scripted narrative beats.
  - Directed VO for narration.

## Education

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- 2020-2025 PhD in Computational Media - *UC Santa Cruz, CA*  
 2015-2017 MSc in Medialogy (Games Specialisation) - *Aalborg University, Copenhagen*  
 2012-2015 BSc in Medialogy - *Aalborg University, Copenhagen*

## Selected Publications

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*Guardians Make Their Own Fate.* In J. Kilmer (Ed). *The Psychgeist of Pop Culture: Destiny. Play Story Press.*

*“Communal Ritual Play: Repetition and Interpretation of Game Narratives Across Communities”*  
 ICIDS 2023

Presents framework on communal ritual play in game communities focused on storytelling. Investigates Elden Ring, Destiny 2, and Final Fantasy XIV.

*“Wrestling With Destiny: Storytelling in Perennial Games”* ICIDS 2021.

Analyses and presents a framework for how ongoing live games like Destiny tell stories, by comparing them to sports and professional wrestling.

*“Making the Player the Detective”* FDG 2020.

Compares detective games with detective fiction, finding how most games are not whodunits but thrillers.

*“Well, That Was Quick’ – Towards Storyworld Adaptivity that Reacts to Players as People”* ICIDS 2019 (Won Best Short Paper).

A preliminary exploration of when the world adapts to players in ways that do not affect the plot.

## Skills

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### Design and Development

- Excellent communication skills.
- Playtest design, prototyping and iterative design methods.
- Unity3D, C#, Python.
- Familiarity with Unreal 5.
- Game design methods and theories.
- Time management and agile development practices.
- Git, Sourcetree, Jira, Confluence.
- Problem solving and debugging.
- Team management.
- Electronic music production.

### Narrative and Writing

- Creative writing: Prose and poetry.
- Narrative theory, structure, and pacing.
- Able to produce writing fast and efficiently.
- Twine, ink.
- Giving and receiving in-depth, precise feedback.
- Project management and discipline in large projects.
- English and Danish.
- Blog at <http://www.bjarke.it/>

### Research

- Qualitative methods, user interviews, ethnography.
- Experimental study design, surveys, A/B testing, usability testing.
- Researching and synthesizing complex, messy data.
- Public speaking and presenting information.
- Understanding of the academic landscape in game studies and interactive storytelling research.
- Bouldering

*Pronunciation of Bjarke: [Bj] like Björk, [arr] like a sad pirate, [ke] like kernel.*