

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

- 2020-Now Teaching Assistant (Part time) – *University of California, Santa Cruz*
Part of PhD employment.
Taught classes in game design (CMPM80K, CMPM172, CMPM176), UX (CMPM131), and interactive storytelling (CMPM148).
- 2018-2020 Research Assistant (Part time) - *Aalborg University*
Part of the “[VIZARTS](#)” project on exploring new forms of storytelling.
- Gave talks and ran workshops on interactive storytelling.
- 2017-2019 Programmer, Unity Developer (Part time) - *Pointvoucher*
Startup mobile game development of branded casual games for Android and iOS.
- Developed 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 in 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.

Projects

- 2023-2024 Creative Director – *Telegramms 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, wrote and implemented the narrative.
 - Implemented the bot in Python and conducted playtests.
- 2021-Now Researcher - *Destiny Narrative Project*
PhD Research project into the relationship between live development and storytelling in Destiny 2.
- Deployed and analyzed a survey, inspired by research in collective memory.
 - Performed digital ethnography for 2½ years in the Destiny community.
 - Conducted qualitative interviews with players and developers.
- 2021-2023 Narrative Designer – *LUX*
Research project on using ARGs to study complex psychological and social structures such as resilience 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*
- Implemented prototypes for an interactive documentary museum exhibit, about our relationship to gender and how it changes.
- 2017 Programmer – *Voice of God*
Silly, voice-controlled game made for Global Game Jam at ITU Copenhagen, 2017 in a team of 7.
Won awards for Best Game, Most Hilarious Game, and Most Out of the Box Game.
- 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.

Education

2020-Now 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

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 [unpublished manuscript].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

“Community, Storytelling, and Play: Making and Breaking Rituals in Destiny 2” CHI 2024

Presents the findings of a 2½ year long ethnographic study of the Destiny 2 community, and how they create and break rituals in constant interaction with the developer.

“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

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

Design and Development

- Excellent communication skills.
- Playtest design, prototyping and iterative design methods.
- Unity3D, C#, Python.
- Game design methods and theories.
- Time management, deadline driven production, and agile development practices.
- Git, Sourcetree, Jira, Slack.
- 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/>

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