

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

- 2018-2020 Research Assistant (Part time) - *Aalborg University*
Part of the “[VIZARTS](#)” project.
- Investigating how the film industry could collaborate with interactive storytelling research to develop new forms of 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 on design and implementation of escape room experiences and ARGs.

Projects

- 2021-Now Narrative Designer & Researcher – *LUX (ongoing)*
Research project investigating the use of narrative ARGs to study complex psychological and social structures such as resilience in everyday situations.
- Wrote the narrative of the game 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.
- 2021-Now Researcher - *Destiny Narrative Project (ongoing)*
PhD Research project into the players’ understanding of Destiny 2’s narrative and canon.
- Deployed and analyzed a mixed-methods survey, inspired by research in collective memory.
 - Performed digital ethnography on Destiny players and how they interact with the narrative.
 - Conducting qualitative interviews and analyzing them with a Grounded Theory approach.
- 2019 Programmer - *Flux*
- Implemented prototypes for an interactive documentary museum exhibit, about our relationship to gender and how it changes.
- 2015-2016 Narrative Designer, Programmer, Researcher – *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*

Publications

“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 do not let the player be the detective, but are rather thrillers.

“The Story We Cannot See: On How a Retelling Relates to Its Afterstory”. ICIDS 2019.

An investigation of emergent narrative and retellings and defining “afterstory” as a missing link between a player’s experience and a later retelling.

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

A preliminary exploration of “storyworld adaptivity”, where the world adapts to players in small ways that do not affect the plot.

Creating Interactive Adaptive Real Time Story Worlds. ICIDS 2018.

A workshop on creating adaptive real-time story worlds.

“The Narrative Quality of Games and Play”. Master’s Thesis.

An in-depth investigation of how mechanics and interaction conveys narrative in a game. Includes an analysis of the narrative properties of Chess.

“The Narrative Quality of Game Mechanics”. ICIDS 2016.

The precursor to my master’s thesis, an early exploration of the influence of mechanics in game narrative.

“The Moody Mask Model”. ICIDS 2015.

A social simulation based on Goffman’s mask theory. Evaluated with playtests and a common narrative user experience questionnaire.

Skills

Research

Qualitative methods, interviews, ethnography.

Experimental study design, surveys, A/B testing.

Investigative analysis methods.

Reporting and presenting results and complex information.

Playtest design, prototyping and iterative design methods.

Giving and receiving in-depth, precise feedback.

Development

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.

Narrative

Creative writing, prose, poetry.

Narrative, narrative theory, structure, and pacing.

Branching, interactive narratives.

Twine, ink.

English and Danish.

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