

Michael McDonald

Sr. Lighting Specialist working at Weta Workshop – New Zealand

Phone: +64 27 7720892

Email: michaelbjmcdonald@gmail.com

Portfolio: www.michaelmcdonald.art

Summary

- 12+ years in the games industry and 15 shipped titles
- Skilled at lighting real-time worlds and cinematics
- Deep understanding of light, form and colour theory
- Experience with photography and working with EV
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Strong understanding of performance optimisation
- Art mentorship and leadership experience
- Skilled in task planning and time scheduling
- Natural problem solver with a holistic approach
- Passionate, motivated, accountable and influential

Shipped Game Titles

- “Dr. Grordbort’s Boosters” (**Sr. Artist**) – Magic Leap / Weta Workshop (Magic Leap One)
- “Dr. Grordbort’s Invaders” (**Sr. Artist**) – Magic Leap / Weta Workshop (Magic Leap One)
- “Need For Speed: No Limits VR” (**Sr. Specialist Artist**) – EA / Firemonkeys (Google Daydream)
- “Need For Speed: No Limits” (**Sr. Specialist Artist**) – EA / Firemonkeys (iOS/Android)
- “Real Racing 3” (**Mid-Level Artist**) – EA / Firemonkeys (iOS/Android)
- “Need For Speed: Most Wanted” (**Mid-Level Artist**) – EA / Firemonkeys (iOS/Android)
- “Mass Effect: Infiltrator” (**Mid-Level Artist**) – EA / IronMonkey (iOS/Android)
- “The Sims: FreePlay” (**Mid-Level Artist**) – EA / IronMonkey (iOS/Android)
- “Dead Space” (**Mid-Level Artist**) – EA / IronMonkey (iOS/Android)
- “Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit” (**Mid-Level Artist**) – EA / IronMonkey (iOS/Android)
- “Need For Speed: Nitro” (**Outsourced Artist**) – EA / Firebrand Games (DS)
- “The Sims 3: World Adventures” (**Outsourced Artist**) – EA / IronMonkey (iOS)
- “Path of Exile” (**Environment Artist**) – Grinding Gear Games (PC)
- “Petanque Pro” (**Technical Lead**) – Bigben Interactive / Mere Mortals (Wii)
- “World Sports Party” (**3D Artist**) – Ubisoft / Mere Mortals (Wii)

Specialties

- Lighting pipelines, PBR shaders and Global illumination
- Team communication between art, code design, producers and leads
- Team mentorship, documentation, task scheduling and agile scrum
- Lighting interior/exterior cinematics and real-time environments
- Capturing the visual style of a project using lighting
- Optimisation and profiling for lighting and atmospheric effects
- Photography - working with ISO, shutter speed, EV, and aperture
- Concept art, look-development, paint-overs, and marketing art assets

Software Skills

- Photoshop (17+ years)
- Maya (14+ years) / 3ds Max
- Unity Engine / Unreal Engine 4
- Custom in-house engines
- Substance Suite / Quixel
- After Effects / Premiere Pro
- Perforce / SVN / Jira
- In-house proprietary tools

Education

2006-2007 **Graduate Diploma of Game Development** – MDS – *Auckland, NZ*

- Recipient of the Sidhe Interactive Scholarship for 2006.

2005 **Diploma of Multimedia** – Natcoll Design Technology – *Wellington, NZ*

Experience

Dec 2016 – Present



Sr. Artist

Weta Workshop / Magic Leap – *Wellington, New Zealand*

- Assisting our Senior Graphics Engineers and Art Director to successfully establish a hyper-realistic look for our game titles by the creating a PBR based lighting pipeline.
 - Collaborating with Engineers and SDK teams to improve rendering and performance.
 - Creating real-time and baked lighting for all our environments as well as managing colour grading, atmospherics, reflection probes and creating custom shaders.
 - Helping to bridge the technical gap between our Art Director, Producers, Engineers and Artists in order to achieve our creative goals and deliver on milestones.
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Apr 2013 – Dec 2016



Sr. Specialist Artist

Firemonkeys / Electronic Arts – *Melbourne, Australia*

- Created interior and exterior lighting for a wide range of game titles.
 - Setup IBL's, skydomes, LUT's, light probes, reflection probes, and optical effects.
 - Created realistic night and day lighting for open-world environments.
 - Supervising other artists by providing mentorship, constructive feedback, art guidelines, reference materials and documentation, as well as hosting scrum meetings, assisting with sprint planning, and task scheduling.
 - Collaborating with internal and external teams including: Game Development, Engine Core, Marketing, Legal, Creative Services and Publishing to help plan and produce exciting new game content and improve upon art tools/pipelines.
 - Providing look development images, proof of concepts, visual target images, pre-vis videos, and marketing assets to assist with the projects visual direction.
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Apr 2010 – Apr 2013



Mid-Level Artist

Firemonkeys / Electronic Arts (formerly IronMonkey) – *Melbourne, Australia*

- Modeled and textured real-time environments, characters, vehicles and props for a wide variety of game titles on iOS and Android platforms.
 - Collaborated with designers and Art Leads to ensure environments were effectively facilitating gameplay, free of bugs, and of high visual quality.
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Oct 2009 – Mar 2010



3D Artist – (Contract)

Tin Man Games – *Melbourne, Australia*

- Provided outsourced art assets for IronMonkey Studios and Firebrand Games.
 - Created environment models and textures for games on iOS and Nintendo DS.
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Aug 2009 – Sep 2009



Environment Artist – (Contract)

Grinding Gear Games – *Auckland, New Zealand*

- Created tileable environment assets to support procedurally generated levels.
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Jul 2008 – Jul 2009



3D Artist / Lighting Artist

Mere Mortals NZ – *Auckland, New Zealand*

- Created cinematic lighting and real-time art assets for game titles on Nintendo Wii.
 - Established lighting methods and art optimisation techniques for the team.
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Feb 2008 – Jul 2008



Art Lead / Co-Founder

Disyi Arts – *New Plymouth, New Zealand*

- Directed a small art development team to create our own original IP.