Mike Sennott

Game designer and writer, dedicated to making games that explore new themes and ideas while remaining unfalteringly entertaining.

3825 Whitman Ave N #202   (603) 204-8709
Seattle, WA 98103   mike.sennott@gmail.com

Work Experience

Cofounder / Game Designer @ Universal Happymaker, 2015 - Present
Run narrative-focused game studio, currently developing debut title *Astronaut: The Best.*

Creative Lead @ TechSmartKids, 2014 - Present
Oversee creative development of various coding curricula for children and teenagers.

Cofounder / Game Designer @ Rad Dragon, 2012 - 2016
Led both business and game development with partner. Self-published games on iOS and Steam.

Game Designer / Research Assistant @ USC Game Innovation Lab, 2010-2011
Co-developed digital and paper prototypes and design docs for a project about conservation.

Game Projects

Astronaut: The Best (http://astronautthebest.com/)
Co-creator / Designer / Programmer / Writer, 2015 - present. Currently in development.
A narrative strategy game where you turn underdogs into presentable astronauts using lies, magic, and/or hard work. Currently in development after seed support from Failbetter Games.
✫ The Guardian's Best Games of EGX 2016

Alphabeats (http://alphabeatsgame.tumblr.com/)
Project Lead, 2013-2016. Released by Rad Dragon on iOS July 2014 and Steam March 2016.
A mashup of word and music games, Alphabeats remixes spelling into a fast-paced action challenge, set to pulse-pounding tracks from exciting electronic artists. The PC port added custom songs and controller support.
✫ App Store Featured App, Week of 7/10/14

The Moonlighters (http://www.moonlightersgame.com)
Designer / Programmer / Writer, 2011-2014.
A 1950s heist adventure game about entertainers who settle the score when rock & roll puts them out of a job. It's kind of like being in Ocean's Eleven, if it played a bit like Monkey Island and Zelda.
✫ Official Selection, IndieCade E3 Showcase 2012

Shove Pro (http://www.shovepro.com)
Designer / Programmer / Writer, 2012. Released on iOS by Rad Dragon, November 2012.
You know how in an action movie foot chase, the guy being chased will go to unnecessary lengths to shove any extras who are even remotely in his way? We made a game about that.
✫ Silver ADDY (outstanding advertisement award, for trailer)

Quicksilver: Infinite Story (http://www.raddragon.com/quicksilver-infinite-story/)
Creator / Leader of 32-person team / Designer / Engineer / Writer / Guitarist, 2010-2012.
An action game inspired by Saturday morning cartoon adventures. The game makes up stories on the fly, and you determine how they unfold by playing through exciting action scenes and helping the heroes make important decisions. There's never any game overs or retrying – the story adapts to even the most unexpected successes and failures, dynamically crafting plot and dialogue around them.
✫ Official Selection, USC First Move Festival 2012

Selected Game Reviews

On *Astronaut: The Best:*
> "I have literally never seen anything like this, and I mean that in an agonisingly enthusiastic way."
> - Alexis Kennedy, Founder of Failbetter Games and Creative Director of Sunless Sea

On *Alphabeats*:
> "It's one of the most exciting and fun word games I've played so far. It looks amazing, the music is catchy, and the gameplay is unique, challenging, and incredibly addictive." - Christine Chan, AppAdvice

On *The Moonlighters*:
> "If you're not intrigued yet, I'm not sure we can be friends... I'm pleased to report that the heists are challenging to complete and the writing is remarkably witty." - Alex Wawro, PC Gamer

On *Shove Pro*:
> "Shove Pro is a very funny, cheeky game, but much more importantly, it's a fun one. It's a punchy, satisfying game to play, and it allows a lot of room for skill." - Kirk Hamilton, Kotaku

Education

MFA, Interactive Media
University of Southern California
September 2009 – May 2012
✮ FOX Fellowship (for most promising thesis)

BA, Creative Writing and Computer Science
Hamilton College
September 2005 – May 2009
✮ Summa cum laude with honors (6th in class)
✮ Thomas E. Meehan Prize in Creative Writing
✮ Ralph and Doris Hansmann Poetry Prize

Presentations and Publications

Quicksilver: Infinite Story: Procedurally generated episodic narratives for gameplay.
Masters Thesis, Published by University of Southern California, May 2012.

Ensemble: A Computer-Aided Story System (with Joseph Osborn)
Presented at USC Annenberg Graduate Fellowship Symposium, April 2011.
✮ Viewers' Choice Award for Best Presentation

Especial Skills

- Rapidly prototyping and designing both digital and paper games
- Writing fiction, microfiction, and poetry; especially humor
- Finding ways in which narratives and gameplay can contribute to one another
- Experience leading teams from two to thirty-two people in size
- Music composition, guitar playing, and vocal training
- Experience coding in C#, JavaScript, Lisp, Actionscript, and other languages
- Extensive knowledge of both video and tabletop games in virtually every genre

Resources

Portfolio: http://www.laikafawkes.com
My web portfolio contains an unabridged gameography and writing samples. The "Employment" section curates works that I feel demonstrate my knowledge of narrative design, game design, and game writing.

References and game download codes are available upon request.