

Gillian Blekkenhorst

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Portfolio: <https://blekkenhorst.ca/>
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Games Industry Experience

Narrative Designer and Programmer

Pushing Vertices | 2022 - present

Working with Unity, Dialogue System and interactive UI to create a narrative roller skating game. Programming character controller for a smooth skating experience. Writing branching dialogue for conversations with colorful inhabitants of the neighbourhood.

Programmer

Shine Spark Entertainment | 2021 - present

Working with Unity, Dialogue System and Adventure Creator and interactive UI to create systems in an educationally-minded adventure game.

Narrative and Level Designer

KRAKlab | 2021 - 2022

Narrative and Level design for VR experience on childhood vulnerability - designed in Unity, for presentation in Oculus Quest and Kinect.

Writer

Muuvment | 2022

Writing for an educational interactive narrative about modern slavery in the fashion industry.

Level Designer and 3D Modeler

OYA Scale Up Immersive | 2022

Level design and character modeling for a short VR storytelling game.

Narrative Designer

Peculiar Path | 2020 - 2021

Narrative design for narrative and UI heavy game. Systems implemented in Articy for import in Unreal Engine.

Personal Projects

Translator Alpha

Personal Project

Prototype. You are a translator, working alone on an alien world populated by energy beings you can only see through recordings. Slowly learn their language and uncover their intentions. Twine, CSS experiments.. [Link.](#)

TEEN TEEN BARK MACHINE

Personal Project

A teenage girl navigates both a brutal break up and stumbles through a portal to a dangerous world. Which sucks worse? Told through a contextual bark system which doubles as a practical game writing tool. [Link.](#)

Exhibited in the Experimental showcase of the Hand Eye Society Super FESTIVAL 2022.

The Confusionary

Personal Project

Using GPT-neo and NeuralBlender to build a hypertext poem in Twine, generated from 6 years of my teenage LiveJournal entries. [Link.](#)

Cuddlegeddon: Snugglepocalypse

Personal Project, DMG Origin Stories

Metaphorical battle pong, balancing codependency and independence for a healthy relationship. Reimagined for the Origin Stories show at DMG in Toronto.

[Link.](#)

The Unfathomable Anthology

The Unfathomable Siblinghood

Anthology of 4 short adventure games. Presented at Damage Labs and Comics X Games in 2018.

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Game Education Experience

York University - Instructor

September 2022- December 2022

Lecturer and lead of introductory game prototyping course.

York University - Sessional Assistant Instructor

September 2019 - December 2022

Running Labs in conjunction with game development and media creation courses as a sessional teaching assistant. Professor: Yifat Shaik, Dafydd Hughes

OCADU Continuing Studies - Curriculum Developer - Introduction to Game Design

May 2019 - Fall 2019

Introductory six week game design in Unity.

Digital Media Academy - Curriculum Developer

December 2018 - March 2021

Updating and redeveloping existing curriculums for DMA Instructor training.

Courses include:

- Game Design With Unity
- Unity VR & AR.
- Adventures in Game Design.

Digital Media Academy

Annually 2015-2021

Teaching Unity C#, Python, Java, iPhone Applications, VR, Animation and Modeling in Maya, for groups ages 8-12 and 12-18.

Previous Industries

Production Designer and Set Decorator in film, VFX and animation artist, infographic illustration.

Anthology Comics & TTRPGs

CRIT DMG 1 & 2

DMG, 2021, 2022

Adventure campaign for a themed TTRPG book. Experimental reversible campaign, based on a community generated fantasy world.

Editor: Max Lander

Wayward Kindred

Toronto Comics Anthology, 2020

Nominated for the Ignatz Award for best anthology, and won the Gene Day Award at the Joe Shusters.

Artist: Mary Verhoeven

Editor: Allison O'Toole

Friendship Edition #3 - Expedition

Friendship edition press, 2018

Collection of black and white comics with the theme of expedition.

Editor: Mary Verhoeven

Wayward Sisters

Toronto Comics Anthology, 2018

Anthology comic of monstrous women, by female and non-binary identifying creators

Editor: Allison O'Toole

Sweaty Palms

Sweaty Palms, 2017

Anthology comics of experiences with anxiety.

Editors: Sage Coffey and Liz Enright

Friendship Edition #2 - Iron Friendship

Friendship edition press, 2016

Anthology comic of comic book collective, risographed, 3 color

Editor: Jenn Woodall

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Personal Comic Work

The Turing Verses

2022

Experimental chapbook. Poems created using an AI corpus trained on the artists teenage diary, illustrated using AI trained on the artists previous comic work.

How Not To Care

2019

Selected comics about the intricacies of mental health and social media culture.

House of Strays

2017

Maxine and her 12 cats discover demons living in their home. An experiment in visual narrative, each page has a set panel structure, and each panel follows a different character over a 5 minute period. Handbound. 56 pages, single color risograph.

Nominated for the 2018 Doug Wright Spotlight ("Nipper") award.

Idols of the Cave

2016

A ghost story told from three perspectives, including that of the murderer and the ghost of the murder victim. Intended to be shuffled and read in random order.

Organizations

DMG

2012-2022

Co-founder of the Game Writers Circle
Various workshops:

- Introduction to Unity
- Making a Tiny Point and Click Adventure Game
- Clip Studio for Photoshop Users

Hand Eye Society

2021-2022

Introduction to Unity workshop
Superfest exhibitor

Friendship Edition Press

2014-2022

Comic artist collective. Have collectively put out three themed comics anthologies.

Flick the Switch

2019-2021

Artist collective working out of St. George by the Grange led by Susan Stewart.

co:Lab

2018

Artist collective working out of Artscapes Queen St gallery space led by Tosca Teran

Recognition

OAC Media Arts Grant

2022

Grant to create 'Renters Market', a point and click murder mystery adventure game lampooning Toronto's rental market.

Damage Labs

2022

Selected to participate in a start-up incubator and receive seed funding for game studio founders from historically marginalized and underrepresented backgrounds.

Canada Comics Open Library Residency

June 2022

Selected for a month-long digital residency, including social media take over, workshop and exhibition.

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Nominee - Doug Wright Nipper Award

2018

Nominated for House of Strays and Fully Automated Vacation with Shivaun Hoad.

Discussion Panels

- Wayward Sisters Book Launch, March 2018, discussing women and monsters.
- Horror Comics panel, TCAF, 2018.

Exhibition History

Super FESTival- Hand Eye Society

2022

- Showed TEEN TEEN BARK MACHINE as part of the Experimental Showcase

Comics X Games - TCAF & Hand Eye Society

2018

- Showed The Unfathomable Anthology with the Unfathomable Siblinghood

Damage Camp - DMG

2018

- Showed The Unfathomable Anthology with the Unfathomable Siblinghood

Toronto Comic Arts Festival

- With friendship edition in 2014, 2016, 2018.
- Independently in 2017, 2019, 2021, 2022.

Canzine Toronto

- Independently 2014 - 2019, 2022.

Zine Dream Toronto

- Independently 2014 - 2018.

Other Selection Shows

- ELCAF - With friendship edition 2016
- VanCAF - With friendship edition 2017
- SPX - with friendship edition 2016, 2018.
- CAKE - Independently 2015.
- CAKE - with friendship edition in 2017, 2019.

Education

Game Writing Guardian Masterclass	2022
Experimental Writing with AI	2022
Research Methods for Writers	2022
Interactive Ontario Pitch Perfect	2022

OCAD Bachelor of Design 2006 – 2009

Illustration Major, selected courses in Animation, Integrated Media and Print.

Sheridan College 2005 – 2006

Animation Fundamentals