

# Creative Director of Video Games

**Shadow Program | 9 Classes | June 17th - August 12th**

Skills: Team Management, Game Development, Business Management | Software: N/A



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## Introduction

Students will shadow Dakota Barrett, the creative director of Living Dream Entertainment. Throughout the course Dakota will teach the foundations of being a creative director and how to best direct your team when creating a video game with an independent studio.

The course will follow Dakota as he directs a team of ten plus team members while developing the video game, *Out of the Storm*. The development of which includes game designers, composers, concept artist, sprite artist, asset artist, voice actors, and others. The presentations will take place every Friday starting on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June. Each presentation will go over the subject of that week, questions will be taken at the end of the presentation, and the presentation will be recorded for students who could not attend. An assignment will be provided to all students based upon each week's subject matter.

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### Week One: The Role of the Creative Director (June 17th)

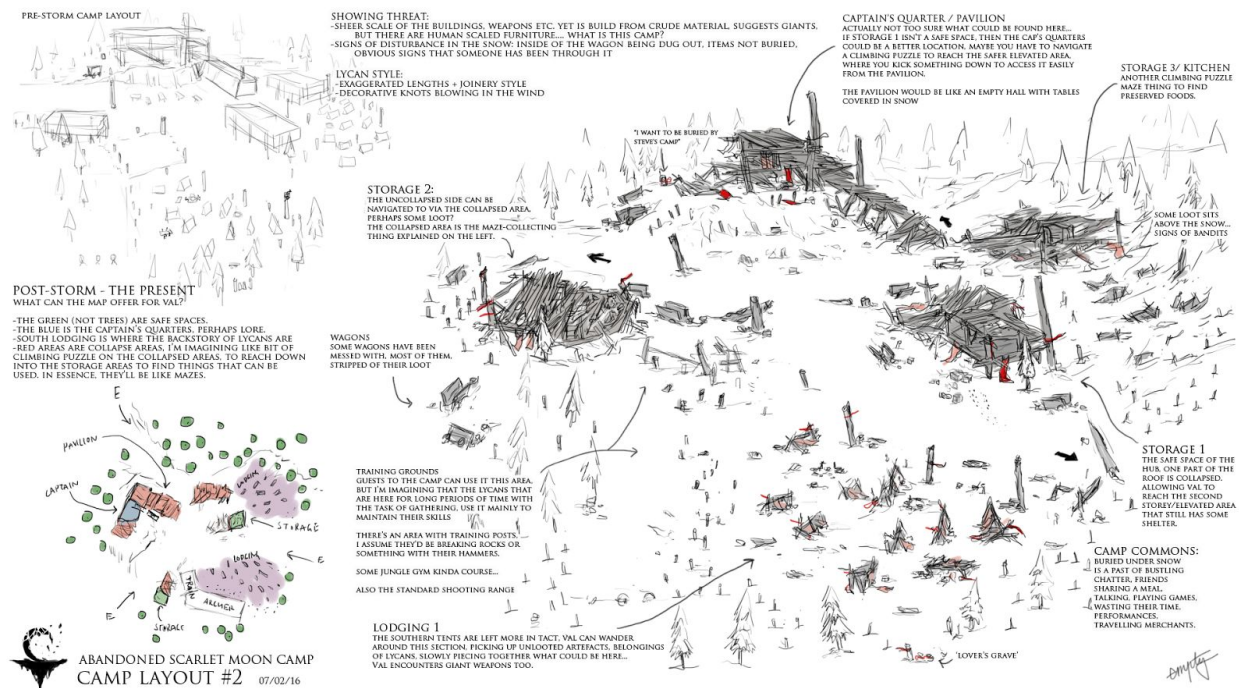
As a creative director it is your job to ensure the overall quality of your game and the efficiency of your team as you create it. It is up to you to lead the creation of the best possible product your team can produce with skills and budget you have available. As such you need a complete understanding of what each of your team members are capable of. What can they create, how long does it take them to create it, how much does that cost to create, and how can what they make be used for the rest of the team?

During this first week I will be providing you the insight of how I handle the creative direction of my team over at Living Dream Entertainment and how we handle the development of our game *Out of the Storm*. We'll be going over who is on the team, the work they provide, the cost of said work, how to track it, and how we use it.

## Week Two: Directing Designers (June 24th)

Designers are your right hand men and women on the team. Their designs will serve as the blueprints for your team to follow and serve as the base of what your game will become. It's up to you as the creative director to ensure that your team is able to execute these designs when creating the game itself and if not, to show the designers what you are capable of so that their designs can be within that realm of possibility.

During this week we will be focusing on how to work with designers on the team. How to take written designs by you and passing them along to art focused designers to flesh out those designs.



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## Week Three: Directing Concept Artist (July 1st)

Concept artists are your free roaming creatives. They're meant to explore what the game's atmosphere should be like, how people in the game look and behave, how the world looks, and so on. They're meant to provide goals for your team to strive for. Although they may not be as restricted mechanically as a designer would be, they are still limited by time and budget.

During this week we'll take a look at both character and environmental concept work for the game *Out of the Storm* and how it came to be. We'll also be discussing how to ensure your artist is creating concepts for content the rest of your team is likely to create with the time and budget you have available.



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## Week Four: Directing Composers (July 8th)

The sound of your game is just as important as the look of it. You may not always recognize that when playing a game but sound can easily be what pulls you in or drags you out of the game world. Music is a key part of what your game sounds like and it's up to your composer(s) to create that sound.

During this week we'll be taking a look at the work of the composers of Living Dream Entertainment and discussing how their work came to be. We'll discuss why a game may sound a certain way and the different ways you can use music in a game that may influence how your composer creates a piece.

[Sample Work](#)

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## Week Five: Directing Sprite Artist (July 15th)

Your sprite artist are both responsible for creating your games characters and beast alike as well as animating them. They often have to take large detailed concept pieces and try to keep as much of that detail as possible on a much smaller scale. Their work must also fit in line with the designs of the game and ensure that the animations line up with what you want the gameplay to feel like and what your programming is capable of.

During this week we'll go over how to help guide your sprite artist into creating your game's sprites by taking a look at some of the people and animals from the game *Out of the Storm*. We'll discuss how to get the best use of the limited space you have as well as how to best use the frames you have available for each animation.





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## Week Six: Directing Environmental Asset Artist (July 22nd)

Similar to sprite artist, your environmental asset artist are responsible for what your game world looks like. They're ultimately responsible for the visual atmosphere of the world and the thoughts you want the player to have as they travel it. Ideally you want your world to both be a compliment to the characters in it as well as contrast so that the two don't blend together.

During this week we'll discuss how to go about creating the visual look of your world as well as how it behaves. We'll go over the many different uses of environmental assets and how those uses have an impact on how your artist should design them.



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## Week Seven: Directing Programmers (July 29th)

Code will more often than not, dictate what you are capable of or not when it comes to actually working in the engine of your game. Your programmers are responsible for that code and how capable it is. Your programmers can affect how powerful or flexible that code is and what your team can do with it.

During this week we'll go over how to work with a programmer to ensure your game behaves as close to your designs as possible as well as how to ensure your team doesn't work on anything your code won't be able to handle.

```
Sprite_Character.prototype.layerBitmaps = function() {  
    this.bitmap = ImageManager.loadCharacter(this._characterName);  
    var actor = $gameParty.leader();  
    var index = actor.characterIndex();  
    for(var i = 0; i < actor.equips().length; i++) {  
        var eq = actor.equips()[i];  
        if(eq && this.paperdoll(eq)) {  
            var tmpBMP = ImageManager.loadCharacter(this.paperdoll(eq));  
            var sx = (index % 4) * this.patternWidth();  
            var sy = (index / 4) * this.patternHeight();  
            this.bitmap.blt(tmpBMP, 0, 0, tmpBMP.width, tmpBMP.height, sx, sy);  
        }  
    }  
}
```

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## Week Eight: Directing Voice Actors/Actresses (August 5th)

Giving your characters a voice can have a big impact on your game and how engaging it is. The way characters speak will affect what players think about them and if they can relate to the character or not.

During this week we'll discuss how to best try and ensure that impact is a positive one. We'll go over some of the different uses of voices in games and how to have your voice talent best deliver what you need for your game.

[Sample Work](#)

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## Week Nine: Creative Direction Summary (August 12th)

After spending the previous several weeks going over the directing of each role amongst the team we will conclude with a summary of what this all means for the overall project. We'll touch back on topics mentioned in the intro to the course and go in more depth now that you have the insight of what it takes to direct the team. As with all previous weeks, questions will be taken at the end to address any additional information.





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## Sign Up

You can sign up for the course by emailing me at, [dakota@createchacademy.com](mailto:dakota@createchacademy.com) with the subject, Shadow Program. I'll be taking the first fifteen students that sign up and after that the course will be closed from live participation. You can still view the recorded classes or partake if another student drops out so be sure to email me regardless. I'll see you there!

Keep creating,

Dakota of CTA