

# Finding Game Audio Work

MUPR 365 - Audio for Games

Professor Spice — May 07, 2025

# Final Project Discussion

## Final project objectives

- This final project should demonstrate your audio design skills and be portfolio-worthy
- Projects should match individual skill levels and interests
- Only a few students are comfortable with game engines
  - Consider collaborating with students that have different skills than you
  - Consider alternatives to direct implementation (video demonstrations, interactive audio demos)

# Final Project Discussion

## Minimum requirements and deliverables

- Minimum requirements (e.g., must include dynamic/interactive audio elements)
- Deliverables format (what to submit beyond the audio itself - documentation, video walkthrough)
- Technical expectations that align with what's been taught in class

# Class Agenda

## Finding Game Audio Work

1. Introduction and Foundations
2. Portfolio Analysis
3. Professional Presence
4. Job Application Process
5. Industry Realities
6. Action Steps & Conclusion

# 1. Introduction and Foundations

# 1. Introduction and Foundations

- **Welcome John Bernard**  
(SU '23, Collaborative Audio Arts, Minor in VR Design)
- **Overview:**  
Today we'll explore the practical aspects of finding work in game audio, using John's journey as our case study

# Professional Definition of Luck

**Luck = Your Preparedness + The Right Opportunity**

- Industry hiring is competitive but predictable
- Portfolio quality dramatically affects "luck"
- John's Journey: From composition to sound design
  - How his education at SU prepared him for opportunities in the industry

# 1. Introduction and Foundations

## Building Your Career Foundation

### Review Portfolio Elements:

- Sound Design / Music Demos (under 3 minutes)
- Soundscape Reskins (1-minute gameplay with new audio)
- Audio Engine Demonstrations (FMOD/Wwise)
- Game Engine Integration (Unity, Unreal, etc.)
- Character Dialogue Samples

### John's Experience:

- Evolution from composer to sound designer
- Critical feedback from Nathan Schroeder (Riot Games)
- Comparison of technical vs. creative portfolios

# 2. Portfolio Analysis

# “Who Would You Hire?”

## Portfolio #1: Alex Chen (Music Focus)

Website Header: *"Audio Composer & Sound Designer"*

### Portfolio Contents:

- Music Showcase (4:30): Orchestral game soundtrack
- Sound Design Demo (1:45): Weapon sounds, environmental effects
- Game Project: Audio composer for student game
- Education: BM in Music Composition, minor in Computer Science

### Technical Skills:

- Pro Tools (Advanced), Ableton Live (Advanced)
- FMOD (Beginner), Unity (Basic)
- Strong composition skills, limited implementation

# “Who Would You Hire?”

## Discussion: Alex Chen

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#### Portfolio Contents:

- What roles could Alex realistically apply for?
- What critical skills are missing for most game audio positions?
- How could Alex make the music focus work as a specialization?
- What one addition would most improve this portfolio?

#### Reality Check:

- Pure composers without implementation skills are competing against thousands globally
- Even music-focused roles now expect basic middleware knowledge

# “Who Would You Hire?”

## Portfolio #2: Morgan Taylor (Technical Focus)

Website Header: *"Game Audio Implementation Specialist"*

### Portfolio Contents:

- Wwise Integration Demo (2:15): Video showing implementation
- Technical Blog: Articles explaining middleware solutions
- Sound Design Reel (1:30): Various sound effects
- GitHub Repository: Audio scripting examples for Unity

### Technical Skills:

- Wwise (Advanced, Certified), Unity (Intermediate)
- C# (Intermediate), FMOD (Intermediate)
- AudioKinetic Certification (Wwise 101, 201)

# “Who Would You Hire?”

## Discussion: Morgan Taylor

- Which studios would value Morgan's skillset most?
- What does certification demonstrate to employers?
- What creative elements are missing from this technical portfolio?
- How might GitHub repositories set Morgan apart?

### Reality Check:

- Technical audio implementation is increasingly valued as games become more complex
- Middleware certification provides an immediate credibility signal

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### Technical Skills:

- Wwise (Advanced, Certified), Unity (Intermediate)
- C# (Intermediate), FMOD (Intermediate)
- AudioKinetic Certification (Wwise 101, 201)

# “Who Would You Hire?”

## Portfolio #3: Jordan Rivera (Creative Focus)

Website Header: *"Sound Designer & Audio Artist"*

### Portfolio Contents:

- Sound Redesign Reel (1:15): Game trailer with replaced audio
- Dialogue Direction Sample (2:00): Voiceover sessions
- Field Recording Collection: Library of original recordings
- Game Jam Projects: Audio for three 48-hour game jams

### Technical Skills:

- Adobe Audition (Advanced), Logic Pro (Advanced)
- Field Recording Equipment, Voice Direction
- FMOD (Basic), Procedural Audio Design

# “Who Would You Hire?”

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- Adobe Audition (Advanced), Logic Pro (Advanced)
- Field Recording Equipment, Voice Direction
- FMOD (Basic), Procedural Audio Design

## Discussion: Jordan Rivera

- What types of projects would benefit most from Jordan's skills?
- How valuable is the field recording specialization?
- What technical limitations might prevent Jordan from being hired?
- How could Jordan's distinctive style overcome technical limitations?

### Reality Check:

- Creative sound design is valuable, but without implementation knowledge, you're dependent on others
- Field recording skills demonstrate initiative and resourcefulness

# “Who Would You Hire?”

## Portfolio #4: Taylor Wong (Generalist)

Website Header: "*Game Audio Generalist*"

### Portfolio Contents:

- Sound Design Demo (2:00): Game sound effects with processing examples
- Wwise Project Showcase (1:30): Adaptive music implementation
- Soundtrack Samples (2:15): Different musical styles
- Game Audio Blog & Unity Audio Demo

### Technical Skills:

- Pro Tools (Intermediate), Wwise (Intermediate)
- Unity (Basic), Ableton Live (Advanced)
- Good balance, but less depth in specific areas

# “Who Would You Hire?”

## Portfolio #4: Taylor Wong (Generalist)

Website Header: "Game Audio Generalist"

### Portfolio Contents:

- Sound Design Demo (2:00): Game sound effects with processing examples
- Wwise Project Showcase (1:30): Adaptive music implementation
- Soundtrack Samples (2:15): Different musical styles
- Game Audio Blog & Unity Audio Demo

### Technical Skills:

- Pro Tools (Intermediate), Wwise (Intermediate)
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## Discussion: Taylor Wong

- Is it better to be a specialist or generalist in today's market?
- Which studio size would be most interested in Taylor's skillset?
- What depth is missing that might concern employers?
- How important is ongoing industry engagement through blogging?

### Reality Check:

- Small studios often need generalists who can handle multiple audio tasks
- Larger studios typically look for specialists with deep expertise

# 2. Portfolio Analysis

## Questions for John Bernard

John Bernard  
MUPR 480  
Prof. Spice  
11/28/2023

### Sound Design in Video Games

*A demonstrative lecture covering the production, authoring, and implementation of music and sound in video games.*

*Start at 23:25*

- Based on your conversations with industry professionals, which portfolio seems most competitive?
- How does your own portfolio compare to these examples?
- What feedback did you receive that changed your portfolio approach?
- What technical skills were most valuable in getting your foot in the door?
- How important was your Wwise certification in your job search?

# Game Composer Reel - John Bernard 2024

## A Collection of Sounds for Interactive Experiences

- Posted Dec 13, 2024: *“Here is my Composer Demo Reel for this year! Some of the songs are unfinished...”*



JOHN BERNARD

2024

GAME COMPOSER REEL

# Game Dev Update - Projects and Next Steps

## From Sound Design to Indie Dev: An Overview of Works and Plans

- Mar 4, 2025: John's latest game development update, showcasing his diverse skills from audio to art and project management across projects like "KILL ALL ALIENS," his main indie focus. He touched on collaborations, including a VR experience, and hinted at future content on a separate "Game Cave" channel.



# Wwise Implementation and Sound Design Reel (Unreal Engine)

## Wwise Integration and Sound Design Reel for UE5.2 by John Bernard

- This project is an educational VR experience, "Ghosts of the Argonne"



# 3. Professional Presence

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## Building Your Professional Image

- Social media presence for industry networking
- Consistency across platforms and materials
- Appropriate content and professional tone
- Industry engagement through forums and communities

## John's Experience:

- LinkedIn outreach strategies
- Connections that led to valuable feedback
- Professional relationship building

# 3. Professional Presence

## Networking in Game Audio

- Kindness and generosity in industry relationships
- Game jams and meetups as networking opportunities
- Conferences and expos worth attending
- Online communities and forums

## Digital Audio Elevator Pitch Activity:

- Create a 30-second professional introduction
- Who are you? What's your specialty?
- What makes your audio work distinctive?
- What type of projects are you seeking?

# 4. Job Application Process

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## Finding Game Audio Opportunities

### Job Search Strategies

- Industry-specific job boards ([Hitmarker](#), [GameJobs.co](#), [Soundlister](#))
- Company career pages for studios you admire
- LinkedIn jobs and game audio community groups
- Game audio forums and Discord servers

### Understanding the Employer's Perspective

- Studios receive 100+ applications for entry-level positions
- Initial portfolio review is often under 60 seconds
- They're looking for technical skills AND team fit
- Each studio values different audio specializations

### John's Insights:

- Where he finds job postings
- How he researches companies before applying

# 4. Job Application Process

## Résumé Best Practices

- One-page format focusing on relevant audio experience
- Highlight specific technical skills (Wwise, FMOD, Unity, Unreal)
- Quantify achievements where possible
- Include links to portfolio and LinkedIn

## Cover Letter Strategies

- Customize for each studio (reference their games)
- Address specific needs from job description
- Explain what makes you unique as a candidate
- Keep it concise (3-4 paragraphs maximum)

## Portfolio Organization

- Lead with your strongest work (10-second attention grab)
- Clear categorization of different skills
- Brief descriptions of your role and approach
- Easy navigation to hear your work quickly

## John's Insights:

- What application materials received positive feedback
- How his portfolio evolved based on feedback

# 4. Job Application Process

## The Interview Process

- First and second interview expectations
- Common audio tests and technical challenges
- Post-interview etiquette and follow-up
- Preparing for different interview formats

## Mock Interview Questions:

- "Walk me through your implementation process in Wwise/FMOD"
- "How would you approach creating sounds for [specific game element]?"
- "What's your experience with version control and audio asset management?"
- "Tell me about a challenging audio problem you solved"

# 5. Industry Realities

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- Overcoming imposter syndrome
- Learning from rejection and feedback
- The importance of perseverance
- Contract work vs. full-time employment
- Remote work dynamics and expectations

## John's Experience:

- Part-time contracts and project work (Moore College, Wilton House)
- Project management approaches (Trello, etc.)
- Maintaining motivation during job searching

# 5. Industry Realities

## Valuable Side Skills - Beyond Audio

- Game/level design understanding
- Scripting and programming basics
- Testing methodologies
- Documentation and communication skills
- Project management familiarity

## Reality Check:

- Audio doesn't exist in isolation - understanding game development improves your work
- Communication skills often make the difference in team integration

# 6. Action Steps & Conclusion

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## Action Steps for Students

- By next semester, what one project would most improve your portfolio?
- Which technical certification should you prioritize?
- Name one industry professional whose work you should study
- What unique audio signature makes your work recognizable?
- What is your 6-month action plan for skill development?

# 6. Action Steps & Conclusion

## Key Takeaways

1. Start building your portfolio NOW, not in your final semester
2. Master at least one middleware solution completely (FMOD or Wwise)
3. Work on real game projects, not just isolated audio examples
4. Develop a personal style while meeting technical requirements
5. Network actively and seek feedback from professionals

**“What is one thing I can do today to improve my skills (*tech or creative*) AND make a new connection?”**

# 6. Action Steps & Conclusion

## Resources

- Industry organizations and communities
- Recommended books and online courses
- Job boards and networking platforms
- [www.keithzizza.net/gaf/students/resources](http://www.keithzizza.net/gaf/students/resources)
- John's recommended resources