

Lead Environment Artist with 15+ years of experience delivering high-quality environments across 8 shipped titles, including Killer Instinct and F.E.A.R. 3.

Specialized in Unreal Engine pipelines, world-building, and lighting, with a strong focus on performance optimization, scalable systems, and gameplay-driven environments.

Proven leader in cross-discipline collaboration, mentoring teams, and driving visual direction from concept through final production.

SKILLS

- Environment Art Direction & World Building
- Lighting & Atmosphere
- Unreal Engine (UE4/UE5)
- Performance Optimization (HLOD, LODs, memory budgets)
- Materials & Shaders (PBR, RVT workflows)
- Cross-Discipline Collaboration

TOOLS

3ds Max • ZBrush • Substance Painter • Quixel Mixer • SpeedTree • Gaea • Adobe Suite

CONTACT

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rise3d.net

Chicago, IL



EDUCATION



Art Institute of California - San Diego
BAS Game Art & Design
2009

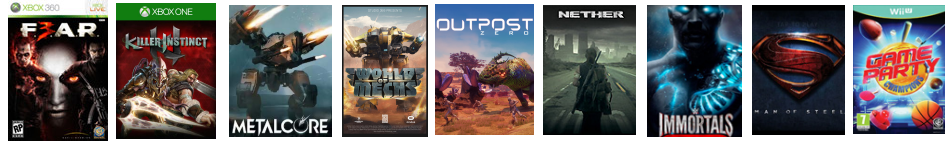


CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

WILL KOWACH

LEAD ENVIRONMENT ARTIST

Shipped Titles



EXPERIENCE

LEAD WORLD ARTIST & DESIGN

Studio 369 (2020 - 2025)

- Led environment art and world-building across large-scale Unreal Engine projects, including World of Mechs VR and MetalCore, aligning visual direction with gameplay and level design.
- Directed level layout, spatial composition, and set dressing to improve player navigation, combat readability, and overall gameplay flow.
- Established environment pipelines and workflows supporting efficient asset integration, iteration, and production scalability.
- Collaborated cross-discipline with design and engineering to deliver optimized environments, balancing visual fidelity with performance targets.
- Mentored artists and provided ongoing feedback to maintain visual consistency and elevate team output.

LEAD ENVIRONMENT ARTIST

Symmetric Games Studios (2016-2020)

- Co-founded and led environment art development for Outpost Zero, a sandbox survival title built in Unreal Engine 4.
- Owned world-building pipelines, including terrain development, modular asset workflows, and environment production from concept to final implementation.
- Defined visual direction and technical standards, ensuring consistency across environments while supporting gameplay systems.
- Developed scalable workflows to support open-world production, improving iteration speed and team efficiency.
- Collaborated with design and engineering to integrate gameplay systems within the environment, supporting exploration and player progression.

SR LIGHTING ARTIST

Iron Galaxy Studios (2015-2016)

- Led lighting optimization and visual overhaul for Killer Instinct Season 3, improving scene readability and runtime performance across multiple levels.
- Developed and implemented lighting systems, materials, and environment assets within Unreal Engine.
- Optimized scenes through lighting passes and asset adjustments to meet performance targets without sacrificing visual quality.
- Mentored junior artists and provided technical guidance on lighting workflows and best practices.
- Collaborated with cross-functional teams to maintain visual consistency and support production milestones.

LEAD ENVIRONMENT ARTIST

Phosphor Games Studios (2012-2015)

- Led environment art production across multiple shipped titles, including Nether, Man of Steel, and WWE Immortals.
- Directed the creation of environments, materials, and lighting, ensuring high-quality visual output aligned with project goals.
- Coordinated with studio leadership to meet production milestones, maintaining quality and consistency across multiple projects. Established environment art workflows and contributed to pipeline improvements for more efficient production. Supported and mentored team members, driving quality through feedback and collaboration.

ENVIRONMENT ARTIST

Day 1 Studios (2010-2012)

- Created environment assets, materials, and world geometry in support of level design and gameplay requirements.
- Contributed to the development of F.E.A.R. 3, delivering high-quality assets for next-generation platforms.
- Collaborated with designers and engineers to ensure assets supported gameplay, performance, and visual targets.
- Developed collision, texture, and asset setups optimized for real-time performance.