Stephen Hauer

Head of Art · Art Director

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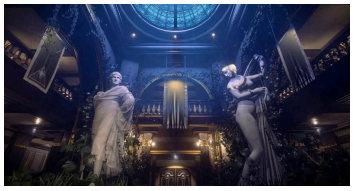
Head of art and art director for licensed games and 3D content. When a deadline is slipping, people come to me to work out how we still hit it without sacrificing the visual quality. I care how things get built: built correctly, so nobody has to go back into the content and change it later. I built and led the art department at Camouflaj on République and Marvel's Iron Man VR, and led the first 15 months of art on Batman: Arkham Shadow through Marvel, Sony, Warner Bros., DC and Meta review. At Poliigon I ran art and external development under the CEO through three rounds of budget reductions.



Batman: Arkham Shadow
Art Director · first 15 months · Quest 3



Marvel's Iron Man VR
Art Director · PlayStation VR, 2020



République Remastered
Art Director, lighting · Unity 5



Poliigon
Head of Art & External Development

~25 → 200+	$535 → $170–340	~40% → <15%	20+ → 4
finished assets a month	cost per asset	first-pass rejection	in-house art team
POLIIGON · 2022 VS 2024–25	POLIIGON	POLIIGON	POLIIGON · 2022–2024

EXPERIENCE

Poliigon

Feb 2022 – Aug 2026

Head of Art & External Development (title: Director of Assets) · Remote · contract through Rusty Nail Media

Commercial 3D asset marketplace for game and film studios. Reported to the CEO; owned art direction, team, pipeline, outsourcing, roadmap and a $1M production budget.

- Output rose from about 25 to 200+ finished assets a month (2022 vs 2024–25, sustained four months) and releases moved to weekly; cost per asset fell from $535 to $170–340.
- Cut first-pass rejection from ~40% to under 15%, mostly clerical errors, with retraining, documentation, templates and export tools.
- Led the art function through three rounds of company-wide budget reductions (2022–2024), from 20+ in-house artists to 4, choosing which roles to keep within each headcount target.
- Held the release schedule by rebuilding production for the smaller team: contract artists paid per approved asset (2023) and an India contracting team built from zero (2024). Trained 60+ artists.
- Built the export tool and map standardizer myself (AI-assisted development): export fell from 10–20 min per asset to seconds.
- Designed the photogrammetry automation and managed the 2–3 programmers who built it: processing went from 2–3 hours on the artist's PC to under 10 minutes of setup, and throughput from 2–3 to 10–15 assets per artist per day.
- Set model standards (triangulated meshes, import and export settings per application), Blender and Substance templates, and QA tools for poly density and memory budget. Remastering pipeline with 900+ legacy assets in process at peak.
- Ran brand partnerships with Twinbru, Delta Millworks, Best Cheer Stone, Nicolaquinto and WeraJane: 500+ digital-twin assets.
- Led AI production strategy (ComfyUI texture and HDRI workflows); hands-on with models, materials and final QA on ~70% of assets.

Camouflaj

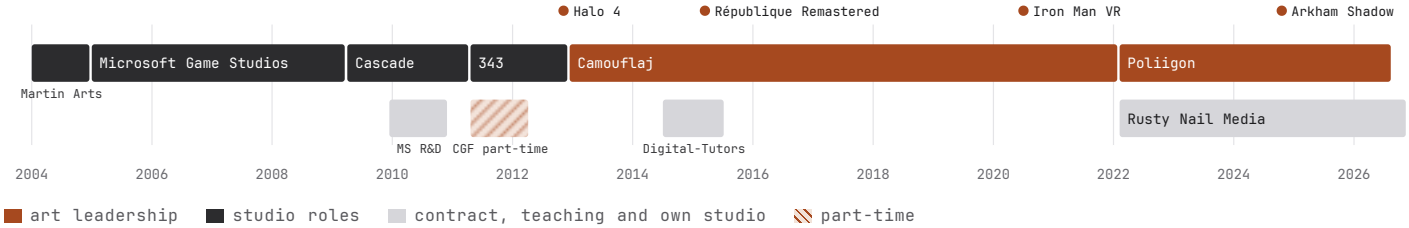
Dec 2012 – Feb 2022

Head of Art (title: Art Director / Technical Art Director) · Bellevue, Washington

Built and led the art department on République and Marvel's Iron Man VR (PlayStation VR, 2020): 12+ full-time artists, 25+ at peak. Led art on Batman: Arkham Shadow (Meta Quest 3) for the first 15 months; it won Best VR/AR Game at The Game Awards 2024.

- Led art through licensor and publisher review: Marvel Games and Sony on Iron Man VR; Warner Bros., DC and Meta on Arkham Shadow. Ran concept and model sign-off and mood iterations, and held the work to each franchise's canon.
- Directed external vendors and co-development partners, including about 12 character assets by Virtuos on Iron Man VR, and set the quality bars and review process for outsourced art.
- Built the department: hiring, pay, mentorship and careers across modeling, texturing, lighting and technical art.
- République Remastered, with early access to Unity 5: led the move to physically based shading, updating 2,000+ materials and 10,000+ textures in under four months, 1,500+ and 7,500 of them by an external partner in about two months. Lit the entire game.
- Architected the production pipelines, documentation and quality standards, including a one-click PC-to-mobile content versioning system and Substance tooling.

CAREER



343 Industries (now Halo Studios)

Apr 2011 – Dec 2012

Environment Artist, Halo 4 · Kirkland, Washington

- Environment art for missions 3 and 8 ("Forerunner", "Midnight") and the Cryptum model, plus multiplayer map art and optimization.
- Hard-surface props, device machines (including animated devices Master Chief interacts with) and decals, built to designer mass-outs from high-resolution sculpt to optimized low poly. Contributed to Spartan Ops.

Microsoft

2005 – 2010

3D Production Artist

Microsoft Game Studios, 2005–2009: Flight Simulator X, Microsoft ESP, Forza Motorsport 2, Train Simulator 2 (cancelled). Microsoft Research and Development, contract, 2009–2010: Avatar Kinect.

- Helped establish a multiple-UV pipeline that raised texel density from 1 meter to 1 inch per pixel, and extended the extrusion system that auto-generated fences, roads, tunnels and bridges worldwide.
- Trained 10 full-time and 20 contract artists and reviewed hundreds of vendor assets. Built 12+ environments that shipped with Avatar Kinect (2011).

Earlier. Cascade Game Foundry, Lead Artist, 2009–2012 (part-time from 2011, while my replacement came on): set asset specs and built prototype assets for its playable demo. Martin Arts, freelance 3D artist on Flight Simulator X, 2004–2005.

CONSULTING AND INDEPENDENT WORK

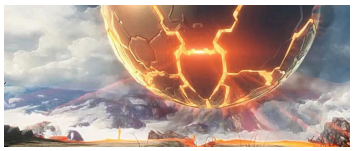
Rusty Nail Media

Feb 2022 – present

Founder & Principal · Missoula, Montana

Consultancy and product studio for production operations, pipeline architecture and 3D tools.

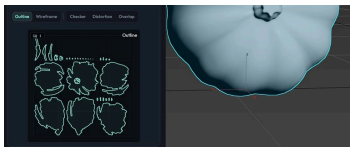
- Genpop Interactive: production set-up for a newly funded AAA studio (workflows, PBR standards, naming, Jira). Myr (2022–2024): asset pipelines and training for its move to VR.
- Tools R&D, designed and specified, built with AI-assisted development: UVRelay (3ds Max UV round trip with a UV-QA validator; built, never released) and TexFunnel (Substance 3D Designer export preflight; working interface prototype).
- Rewind Hollow: creator and art director of an original children's publishing brand (pen name Estella Hollow), using AI-assisted production.



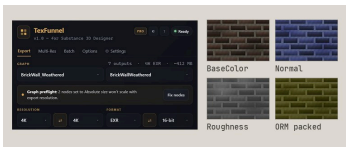
Halo 4
Environment art · 343 Industries



Rewind Hollow
Creator and art director



UVRelay
Tools R&D · built, never released



TexFunnel
Tools R&D · interface prototype

TALKS AND TEACHING

GDC 2015, Unity-sponsored session. "The 5 Fundamentals to Asset Creation": PBR content workflows in Unity, with République as the case study.

Digital-Tutors / Pluralsight, 2014–2015. Mentor and author of three courses: studio game assets in 3ds Max and Unity, content for physically based shading, and kitbashing pipelines.

TOOLS

3ds Max · ZBrush · Blender · Substance 3D Designer, Painter, Sampler · Metashape · Unity · ComfyUI · Claude Code · Jira

EDUCATION

The Art Institutes · Associate of Arts, Game and Interactive Media Design, 2003

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