

Matt Swartz

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Art Director

An accomplished **Art Director** highly regarded for 10+ years of experience developing conceptual art and designs proven to drive brand engagement and reach. Recognized as a leader with expertise in story, concept design, color, layout, storyboards, animation, merchandising, and more, leveraged to create and establish instantly recognizable brands. A flexible collaborator who works well with diverse personalities and people at all levels of an organization.

Key Expertise

- Art Direction & Management
- Story & Visual Development
- Game Development
- Illustration
- Concept Design
- Backgrounds
- Product Design
- User Interface (UI)
- Adobe Illustrator & Photoshop

Professional Experience

Art Director Concept | Kongregate | 2020 – Present

- Oversee the visual identity and development for branded casual games, including characters, environments, props, user interface and more.
- Manage multiple external and internal artists, including animators and UX/UI, and additional creatives.

Design Lead | Walt Disney Imagineering | 2019 – 2020

- Designed digital and interactive experiences, focusing on story and design from concept through completion.
- Led multiple cross-functional teams of up to 20 from diverse backgrounds, including software developers, animators and animation support, and additional creatives.
- Created multiple concepts and concepts, unifying into a singular style, presenting options to key stakeholders, and achieving adoption from all major franchise holders.

Art Director | Disney Interactive | 2017 – 2019

- Oversaw the visual direction for 3 games in production, serving as Art Director.
- Led a cross-functional team of 8, assessing skills, mentoring talent, and empowering creative self-starters.
- Created style guides and concept art as product manager, focusing on visual designs, 2D/3D art, UX/UI, animation and branding tool, ensuring unified messaging.
- Built and nurtured vital relationships with industry leaders, including Disney, Pixar, and Lucasfilm.
- Directed global teams of up to 10 as well as 3rd party vendors, supporting Disney brand initiatives by providing feedback and aligning all art assets with specific brands guidelines.
- Spearheaded a team of artists to design a new emoji style that could be leveraged across the company.
 - Developed strategy and style guides, and pitched the concept to high profile, C-Level executives.
 - Created new game and brand, *Disney Emoji Blitz*, from the ground-up, grossing \$1M+ and reaching #1 on Apple and Google app stores with multi-millions of downloads worldwide.
- Art directed and managed the brand for Disney's video series, *As Told By Emoji*.
- Expanded the Emoji concept to a unifying style for all emoji projects going forward, developing a comprehensive brand leveraged by the Disney Channel, Consumer Product, and Disney+ for merchandise and videos.

Lead Artist | Disney Interactive | 2015 – 2017

- Spearheaded creative development, asset production, and design for mobile games.
- Provided character designs, layouts, and storyboards and collaborated with producers, engineers, and designers on technology, game features, mechanics, story development, and scope, cultivating the visual direction of games.
- Prioritized multiple projects with competing deadlines, consistently delivering on time and within scope.

Professional Experience Continued

- Created *Inside Out: Thought Bubbles*, a synergistic opportunity with Pixar's Inside Out, collaborated with filmmakers on story and visual designs and developed concepts and animations in line with existing branding, reaching #1 on both Apple and Google app stores with millions of downloads worldwide.

Senior Artist | Disney Interactive | 2012 – 2015

- Played a vital role in all aspects of production by creating high quality visuals for mobile games.
- Concepted character and prop designs to establish look and feel and created production ready assets based on various Disney properties.
- Collaborated across multiple disciplines, ensuring the highest possible visual quality.
- Oversaw artwork storage and maintained asset libraries with meticulous attention to detail.

Artist | Disney Interactive | 2008 – 2012

- Collaborated with Art Directors to develop concept and story art for console and handheld game titles.
- Storyboarded and pitched concepts to senior management and key stakeholders.
- Built low poly 3D models, costumes, and accessories for Xbox, PlayStation, and DGamer avatars.
- Designed and created backgrounds and themes for Xbox 360 and PlayStation Home storefronts.

Education & Professional Development

Ringling College of Art and Design

Bachelor of Fine Arts; Illustration

The Illustration Academy

Showcases

Art of Mickey Mouse, Disney Publishing Worldwide, 2018

Art of Minnie Mouse, Disney Publishing Worldwide, 2016

Funko: Operation ReDorbz, Captain America 75th Anniversary Juried Exhibit, 2016

Gallery Nucleus, Tribute to Avatar: The Last Airbender, Juried Exhibit, 2015

Projects

Art Director, Unannounced Mobile Game, Q2 2021

Digital Art Director, in progress Epcot Project

Art Director, Frozen Adventures, 2019

Art Director, Disney Emoji Blitz, 2016

Lead Artist, Inside Out: Thought Bubbles, 2015

Lead Artist, Lost Light, 2014

Lead Artist, Where's My Water? 2, 2013

Artist, Where's My Perry?, 2012

Artist, Where's My Water?, 2011