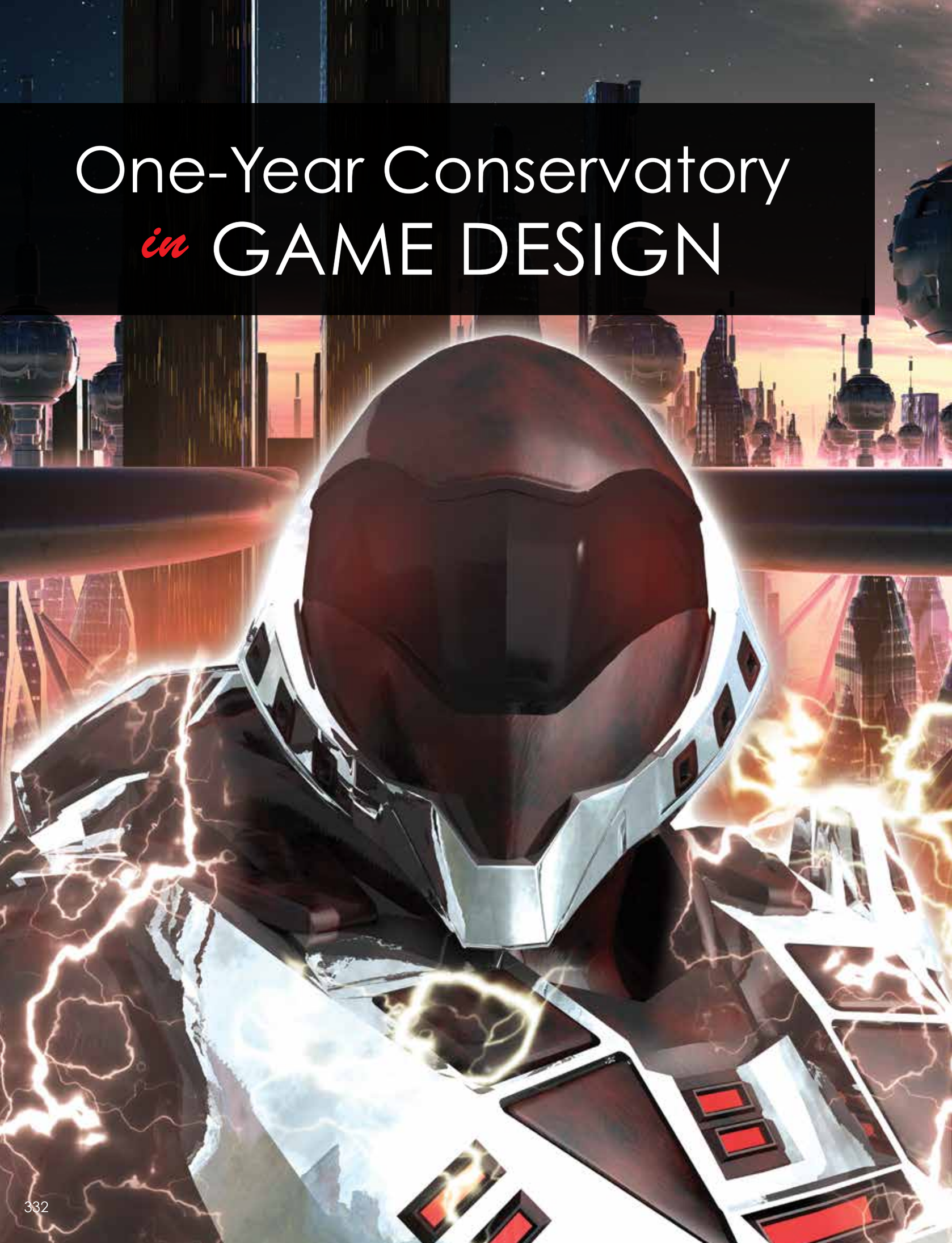
One-Year Conservatory *in* GAME DESIGN



LOCATION

NEW YORK CITY;
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Locations are subject to change.
For start dates and tuition, please visit nyfa.edu

OVERVIEW

Can a student develop the skills necessary to compete in the game design job market in one year? At NYFA's One-Year Game Design Program, the answer is most definitely yes!

The demand for professionals who understand system design and Agile development methodology is very strong in game companies, media, corporations, and educational institutions. But just as important, the immersive game design program at NYFA trains its students—and enables them to build portfolios of real, functional games—at a world-class level.

The One-Year Game Program is a conservatory-based, full-time study certificate program. The curriculum is designed to immerse gifted and energetic prospective game writers and designers in all aspects of the discipline.

The strength of the program is in its combination of storytelling studies, game design theory, game arts education, game programming education, and the hands-on direct application of each. The curriculum focuses on a high concentration of intense game narrative and game design workshops constructed to challenge the individual student beyond his or her status quo and into a new realm.

CHRIS SWAIN
Chair of
Game Design Department

An industry leader for over twenty years, Swain co-founded the Electronic Arts Game Innovation Lab at USC. He has led over twenty award-winning games and products for companies that include Microsoft, Disney, Sony, Acclaim, BBC, Activision, and many more. He is an in-demand speaker and writer on the game industry and innovation.

The program is further enhanced by concentrating on the commercial realities of the medium, real world education through internships, externships, and NYFA's collaboration with industry-leading game development companies on a game designed and deployed by a team of students who work hand-in-hand with working professionals in the game industry.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Skills learned as a result of successful completion of this program include the following:

- The ability to work collaboratively in a high-pressure creative environment.
- An in-depth knowledge of the theories of narrative storytelling in video games.
- An introductory knowledge of the techniques and practices of game art and animation.
- An introductory knowledge of the language and processes of game programming.
- A firm foundation in the theories, methods, and execution of game development, through participation in the creation of a working video game.
- Intermediate understanding of the Maya 3D Art Software.
- Intermediate understanding of the Unity and C# programming environment.
- Knowledge of the history of video games.

Please Note: curriculum and projects are subject to change and may vary depending on location. Students should consult the most recently published campus catalog for the most up to date course information.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

NARRATIVE DESIGN WORKSHOP I

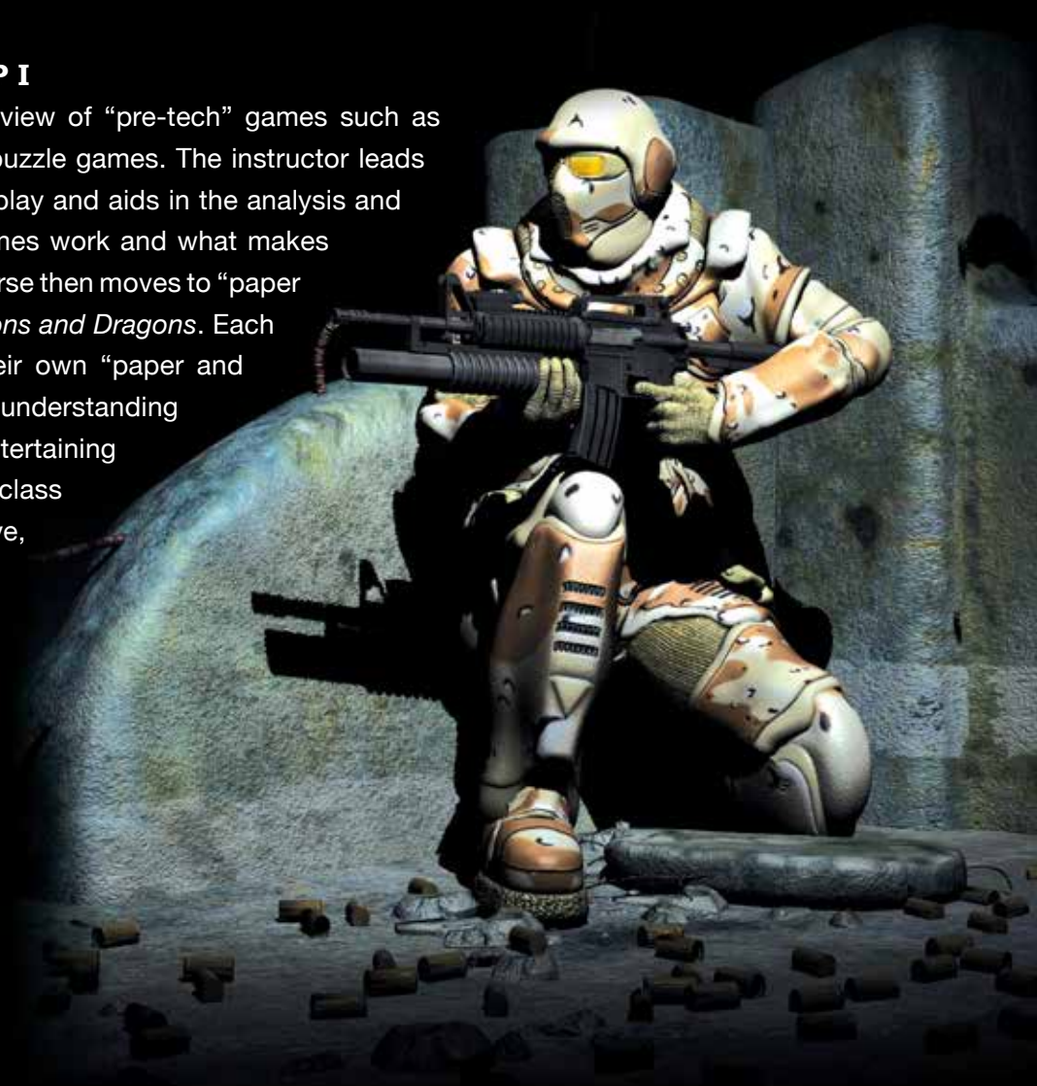
This course introduces students to the art and craft of storytelling. Starting with Aristotle's *Poetics* and traveling through history to Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*, students are exposed to a variety of storytelling forms and theories, from Greek Comedy and Tragedy to Postmodernism and everything in between. With this firm foundation in narrative theory, students are then introduced to the tools, theory, and craft of storytelling in an interactive medium. Special attention is paid to the construction of compelling characters and believable dialogue. Finally, students are introduced to the Game Design Document, the "vision" document that guides every game's development.

NARRATIVE DESIGN WORKSHOP II

Students continue to develop their Game Design Document, with continued in-class workshopping of the document. Focus is placed on a step-by-step approach to turning the "big idea" into a workable game concept and, eventually, a script. In addition, more advanced topics in interactive storytelling are explored, including game properties as franchises; inside the creative process of the game writer; the writer's role in the development team; the dynamics of story changes in game development; and the analysis and deconstruction of selected video game story lines, to help students understand what makes a great video game narrative.

GAME DESIGN WORKSHOP I

This course begins with an overview of "pre-tech" games such as card games, board games, and puzzle games. The instructor leads the students in supervised gameplay and aids in the analysis and deconstruction of how these games work and what makes them fun and compelling. The course then moves to "paper and dice" games such as *Dungeons and Dragons*. Each student is required to create their own "paper and dice" game as a way to gain better understanding of what makes these games entertaining and compelling. Finally, the class switches its focus to interactive, electronic game design, starting with an overview of game development as it works in the industry today, by way of a post-mortem of a AAA-level video game. Students gain an understanding of the challenges involved in bringing a top tier video game from concept to finished project.



GAME DESIGN WORKSHOP II

The Game Design Workshop II will build upon the foundations established in previous courses, and will focus on advanced processes and approaches to successful game design. The course is workshop-focused—a substantial portion of time will be spent actively engaged in the design process. Readings and lectures will supplement discussions as students explore more nuanced facets of the game design process. Creating high quality work is the primary goal and everything else is intended to support that goal. The course will utilize the "playcentric design" methodology, and playtesting, experimentation, and design revision will be the cornerstones of the design approach.

GAME CODING WITH UNITY AND C#, I

The course accommodates students of all levels of existing experience with programming. It is taught by professional game programmers who organize students into Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced groups based on experience level. Individualized instruction is given to each student to ensure that he/she finishes with hands-on ability as a programmer. The development platform used is Unity and C#. Unity allows you to build your game once and deploy at a click across all major console, mobile, and desktop platforms. Each student will complete the course with a Github portfolio of coding modules appropriate to their experience level.

GAME ANALYSIS: INDUSTRY

Students will be educated in many fundamental and various business models found within the games industry today. Included in this course is an examination of the roles and responsibilities of studio staff members, an in-depth review of the online, social and mobile business models, the proposal and contract development process, and success metrics associated with a successful game.

3D ART & ANIMATION

This course introduces students to Autodesk's Maya Animation, Visual Effects, and Compositing software, a robust application used throughout the video game industry for the creation of art assets. In this first of two courses, students learn how to optimize the Maya interface for enhanced productivity. They are introduced to polygon tools and taught polygonal modeling in a hands-on environment. Students create models and character designs using the techniques taught in this class that can then be used in their Game Design Documents and utilized in the Year One Game.

GAME STUDIO: PRODUCING

This hands-on game studio course focuses on the production and development of digital games. Students will form their own game studio development teams with classmates. They will conceptualize and build a working game using the Playcentric Design methodology. Students will be supported by a technical Teacher's Assistant who will assist with programming and consult on technical challenges. The TA will provide coding and support student projects through the technical production workflow.

GAME STUDIO: AGILE DEVELOPMENT

This is the second course wherein students collaboratively deliver a working game over the course of one semester.

Students will conceptualize and build a working game using industry-standard Agile and SCRUM methodology. Teams will use online tools such as Confluence to document their work and Jira to manage their tasks. The course will focus on game production workflow and emphasis will be placed on managing the design, development and testing of a working game by end of semester.

As with the previous Studio course, teams will be supported by a technical Teacher's Assistant who will assist with programming and consult on technical challenges.

ART DIRECTION FOR GAME DESIGNERS

Examining the role of design in building games, this course studies what an Art Director does. It covers the art director's expected skill set (art history, color theory, basic composition, typography, basic digital media skills), and allows students to think about a project in terms of the constraints of technology, client needs, end-user experience, etc. This course will also discuss UX/UI concepts as students will learn how to find a solution and push it further. Students will practice mastering the look and feel of an experience as art directors.

GAME CODING WITH UNITY AND C#, II

This course provides students of Intermediate and Advanced ability extended training with Unity and C#. Like, its precursor course, it is taught by professional game programmers who organize students into groups based on experience level. Individualized instruction and self-paced tutorials are given to each student to ensure that her hands-on skills with coding are improved and her Github portfolio site has additional modules and prototypes. Students will create at least one project that is deployed to three platforms e.g. console, mobile, and web browser.