

IAN KOWALSKI

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EXPERIENCE

Cold Iron Studios – Senior Level Designer Oct 2023 – Oct 2025

Unannounced Sequel to Aliens: Fireteam Elite

- Built early mission blockouts and grayboxes to prototype combat flow and spatial readability.
- Implemented gameplay logic and encounter scripting in **Unreal Engine 4 Blueprints**.
- Delivered functional prototypes used to validate new pacing after a major project pivot.

Striking Distance Studios – Senior Level Designer Oct 2020 – Mar 2023

The Callisto Protocol

- Designed and implemented graybox layouts defining traversal, encounters, and environmental storytelling.
 - Collaborated cross-discipline to align gameplay tone and pacing across multiple environments.
 - Developed playable prototypes to evaluate player rhythm and combat readability during pre-production.
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First Contact Entertainment – Lead Game Designer Jun 2017 – Sep 2020

Firewall Zero Hour / Solaris Offworld Combat

- Directed design goals and milestone planning while mentoring a small cross-disciplinary team.
 - Built **VR prototypes** testing comfort, scale, and mission pacing.
 - Created and scripted the *Missions & Tasks* system powering post-launch challenges for *Firewall Zero Hour*.
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First Contact Entertainment – Game Designer Jun 2016 – Jun 2017

ROM Extraction / Overrun (DLC)

- Established the studio's design documentation and workflow pipeline in Confluence.
 - Built and scripted early VR prototypes using Unreal Blueprints.
 - Developed internal Network Product Management Tool (NPMT) for asset and SKU tracking.
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Starbreeze Studios – *Senior Level Designer* Jan 2015 – Jun 2016

Overkill's The Walking Dead / John Wick Chronicles VR

- Scripted prototype missions using Diesel's node-based toolset.
 - Authored modular kit-building and graybox standards for distributed teams.
 - Owned environment pacing and encounter design for *John Wick Chronicles VR*.
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Activision / Blizzard – Treyarch Games – *Level Designer* Jun 2008 – Dec 2014

Call of Duty Franchise (World at War / Black Ops I–III)

- Designed multiplayer and campaign levels emphasizing flow, line-of-sight, and engagement balance.
 - Maintained multiplayer mini-map systems with UI/UX teams.
 - Contributed to multiple shipped titles and DLC packs across the Black Ops series.
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EDUCATION

Santa Monica College – A.A. Program in Game Design Aug 2001 – May 2003

SKILLS

Engines / Tools: Unreal 4 & 5 (Blueprints, Sequencer, DataTables), Radiant, Diesel, Perforce, Jira, Confluence

Design Focus: Spatial Prototyping • Gameplay Iteration • Encounter Design • VR Comfort • Blockout → Prototype Pipelines • Cross-Discipline Collaboration

Expanding Expertise: Mechanic Prototyping • Data-Driven Systems • Reactive Gameplay Logic • Blueprint Optimization

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Pursuing deeper Unreal 5 Blueprint and mechanic-prototyping skills.
 - Building small-scale experiments to explore trigger logic and player feedback.
 - Active in Unreal Engine and VR design communities to expand technical fluency.
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SELECT PROJECTS & RELEASES

Call of Duty: World at War • Black Ops I–III

Firewall Zero Hour (+ Ops 1–5 DLC) • Solaris Offworld Combat

The Callisto Protocol • John Wick Chronicles VR

Overkill's The Walking Dead (Prototype) • Unannounced Aliens Sequel (Prototype)